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# THE LOGBOOK OF THE CAPTAIN'S CLERK

JOHN S. SEWALL

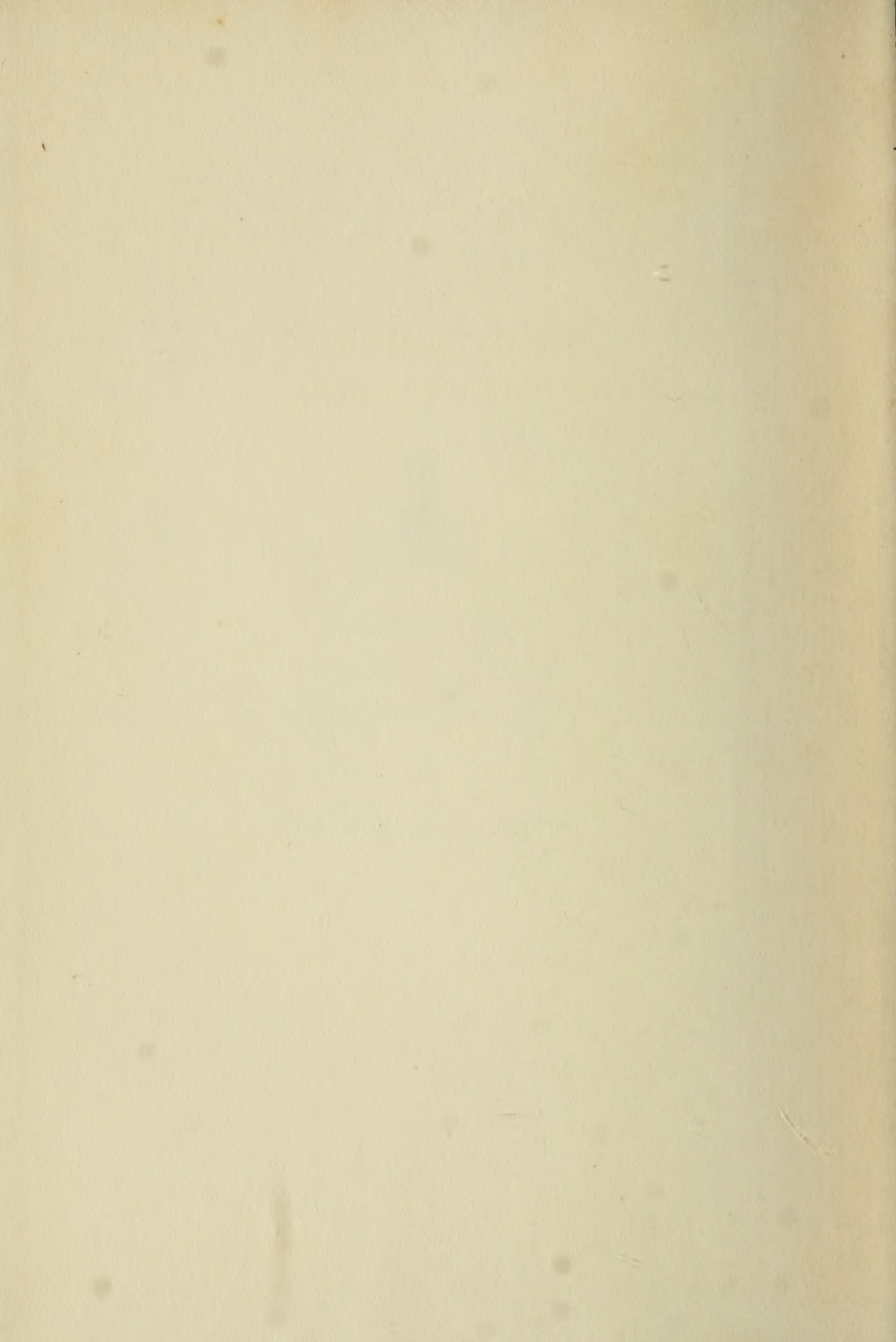


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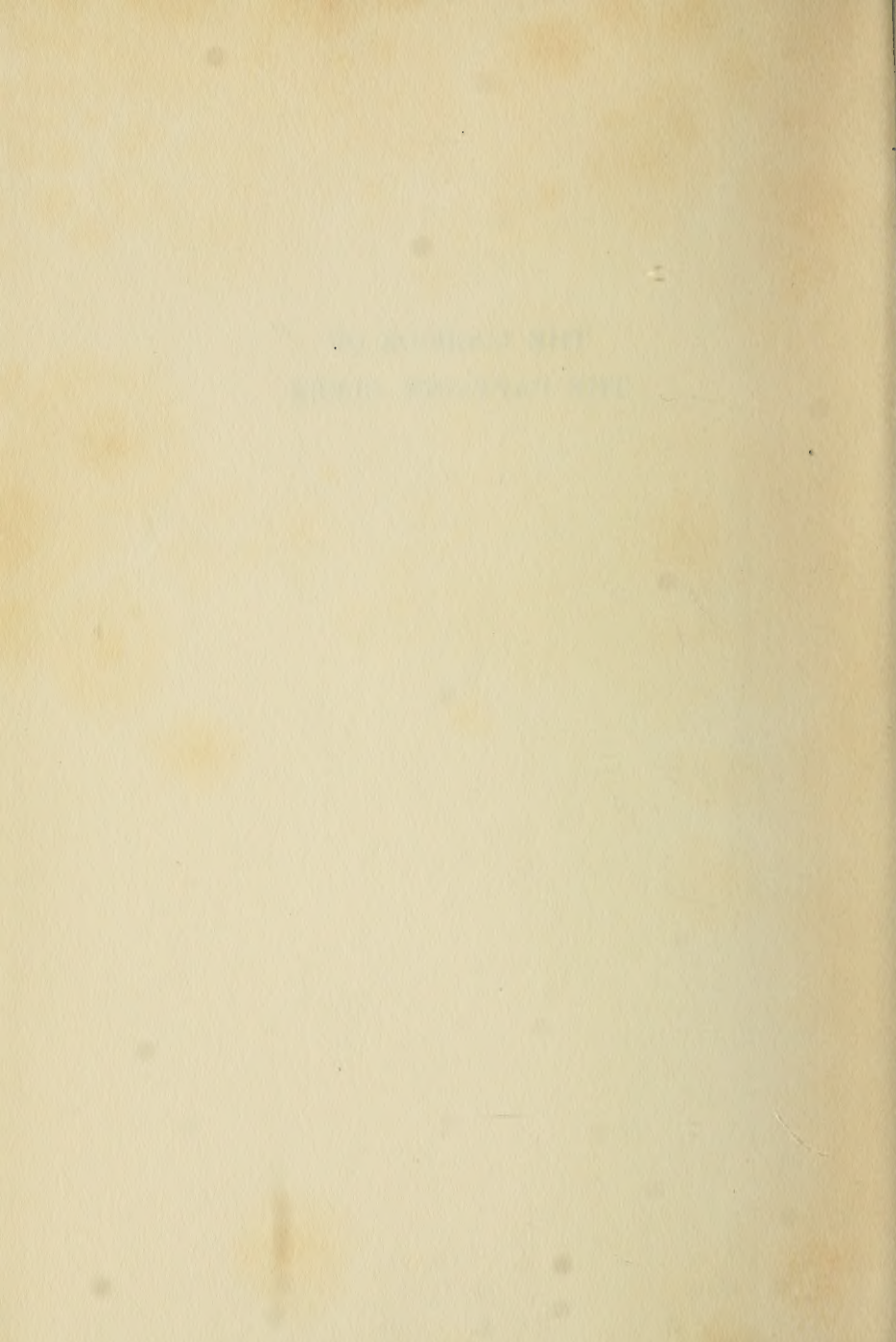
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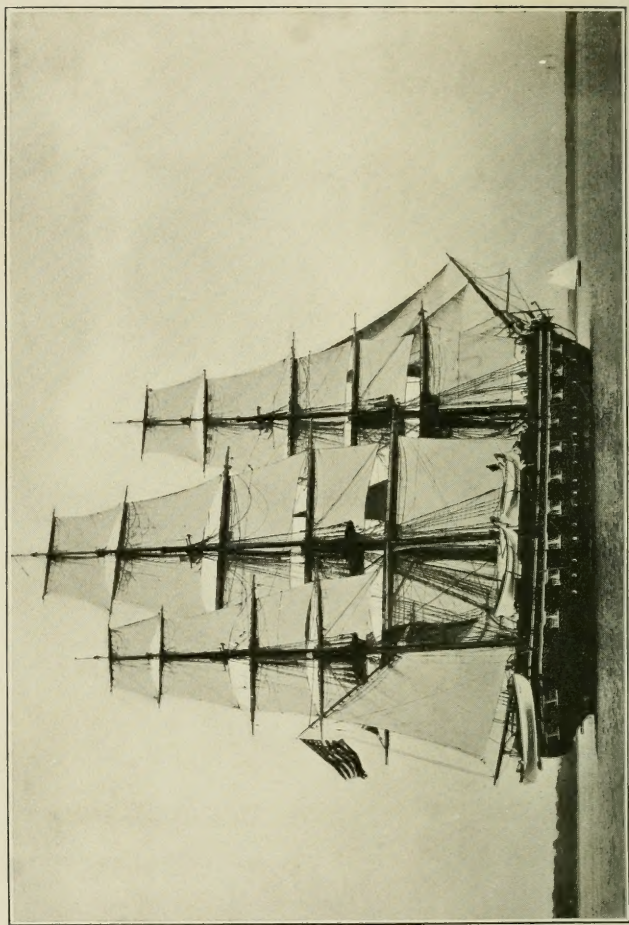


THE LOGBOOK OF  
THE CAPTAIN'S CLERK





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THE LOGBOOK OF  
THE CAPTAIN'S CLERK

ADVENTURES IN THE  
CHINA SEAS

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JOHN S. SEWALL

BANGOR, MAINE

1905

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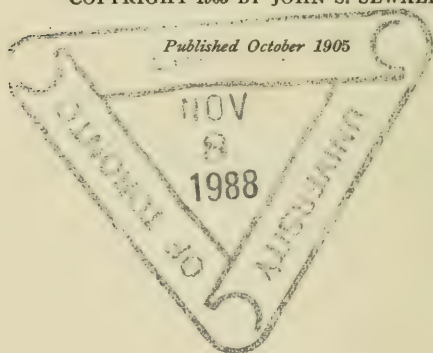
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CHINA SEAS**

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**JOHN S. SEWALL**

**BANGOR, MAINE  
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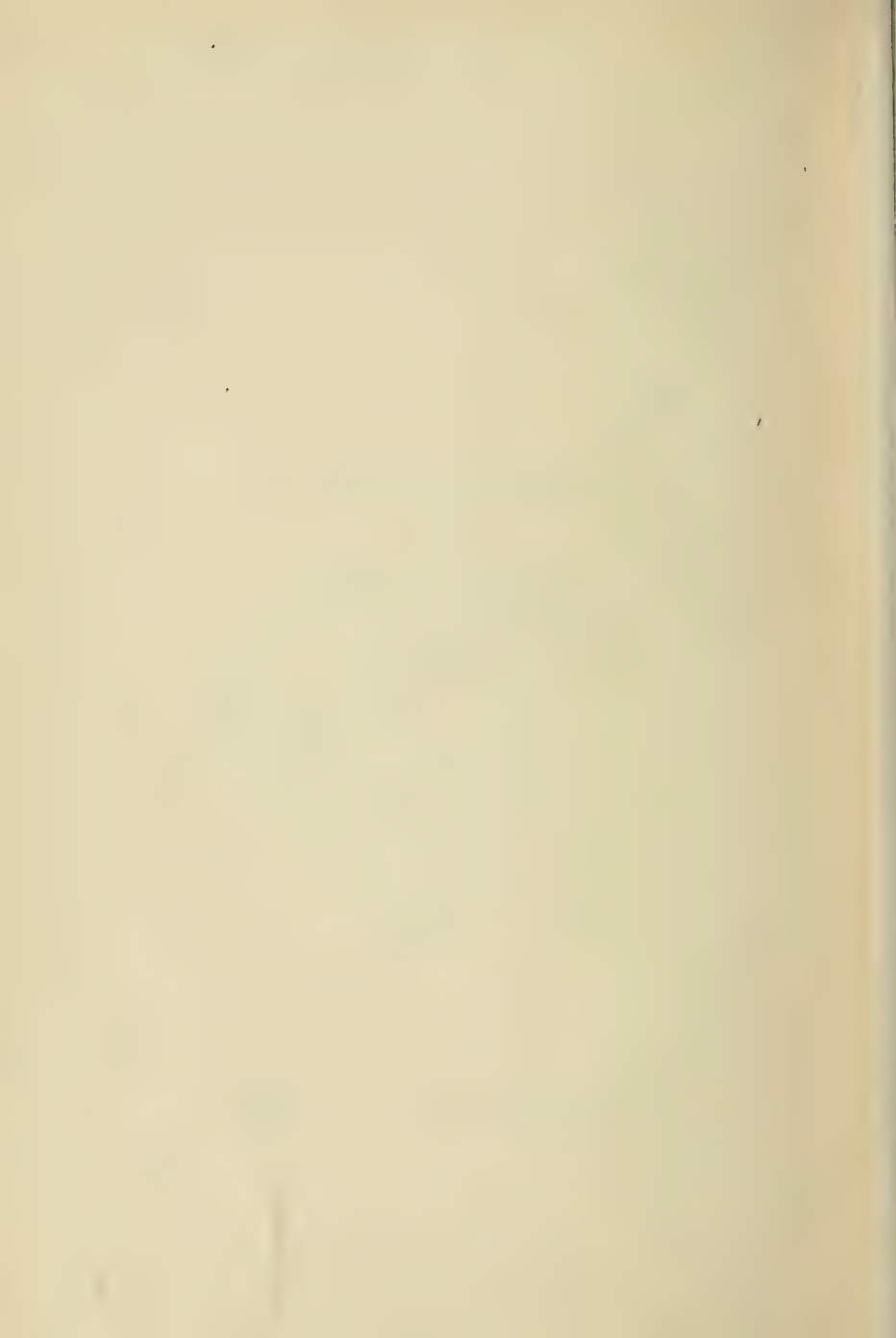
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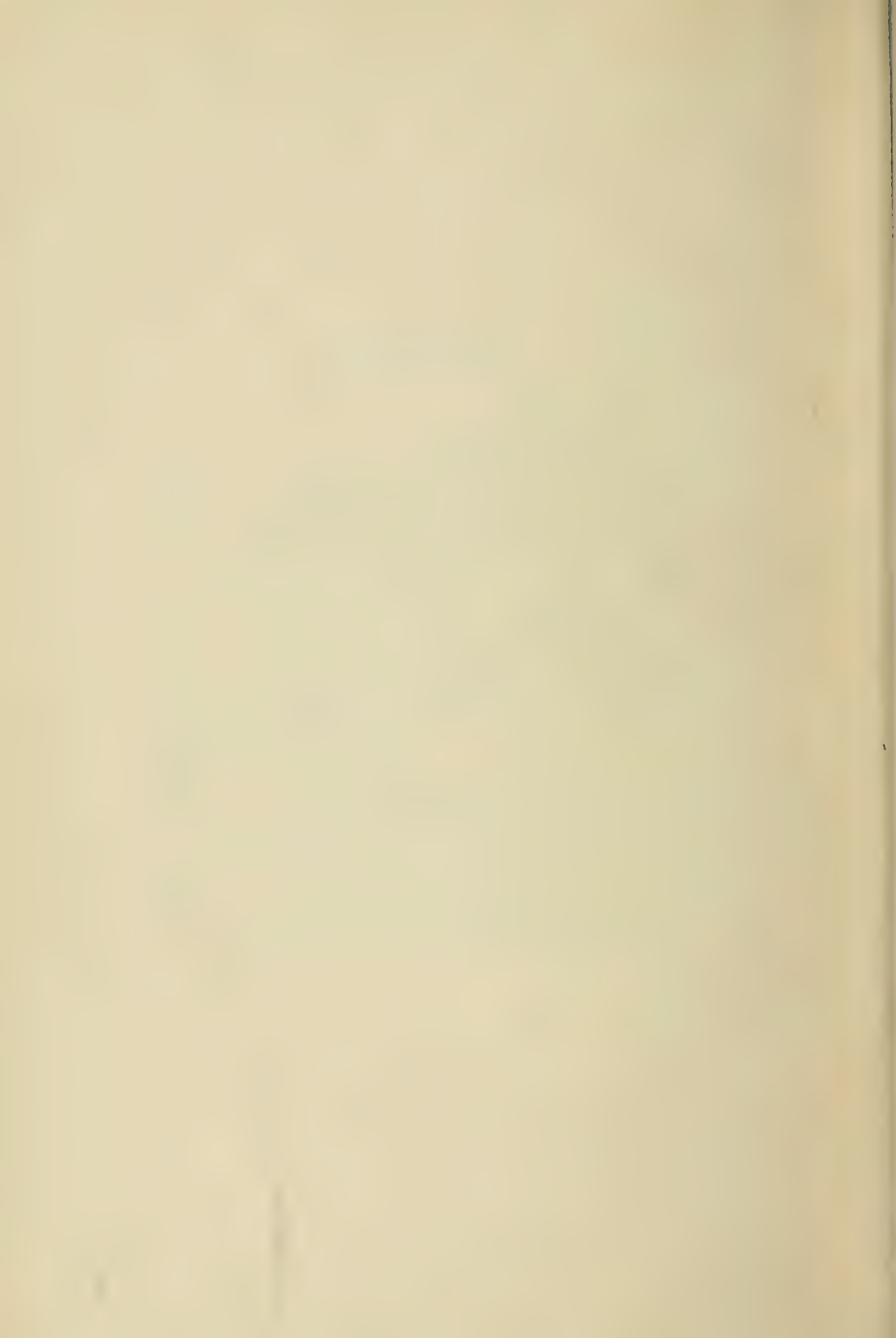
To the Survivors  
OF THE  
Perry Expedition  
TO JAPAN IN  
1853-4





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## PREFATORY

IT is now half a century since the "opening" of Japan. That famous document—the treaty negotiated by Commodore Matthew C. Perry—was completed and signed on the thirty-first day of March, 1854. All the signers are now dead and gone. So are nearly all the actors in the great Expedition. As I stand by the half-century milestone and look back in quest of the two thousand officers and men who accompanied the American envoy to the Empire of the Rising Sun, it has a sobering effect to find that now less than a score of them are known to be living. I feel as if I were alone with my memories, a survivor of a vanished epoch of history.

These pages contain the record of our principal adventures in those distant seas. I can hardly assume that they should have any special interest for any but personal friends. And yet apart from the excitement of mere adventure, the testimony of an eye witness to the scenes and events of the Japan Expedition, and to some of the curious phenomena of the Taiping Rebellion, might seem to



claim a kind of historical value. Japan has startled the nations with the rapidity of her growth, with the brilliant efflorescence of her new civilization, and just now with her daring and skill in beating back the mighty northern Power whose shadow is moving like an eclipse over the great provinces of the East and threatening to blot out the Sunrise Kingdom herself. The military and naval genius displayed in this fight for life has won the admiration of the world. It is instructive to look back half a century and study the contrast.

In their original form some of these narratives first saw the light in the pages of various magazines. I owe my thanks—and hereby cordially pay them—to the proprietors of the *New Englander*, the *Century*, and the *Forest and Stream*, for their courteous permission to use material which they had published before. I should be glad to express my obligations to the *Knickerbocker* also; but that delightful old monthly has long since passed within the shades, and so have its editors, and I fancy most of its readers, too; and to reach them with my thanks would require too long a journey.

I let this little book go out into the wide, wide world with a feeling of affectionate regret. It was my fortune for the next four years after college to

"follow the sea;" and ever since then the sea has followed me — haunted me with its visions, with its memories, with its infinite suggestions of stress and peril, of melancholy and music, of gallant life and lurking death. It has been for many years the recreation of a busy life to call up these distant scenes and reincarnate them in monographs for the entertainment of friends. And now that I gather them and clothe them with the dignity of a book, and the little volume goes out of its nest in my heart into the chilly atmosphere of the world, I experience something of the sentiment one feels in sparing a favorite child who leaves the fireside for some unknown and distant home. If it should chance to reach any of the survivors of the memorable Expedition let it carry a warm greeting from an old comrade. Nearly all of our shipmates have finished their voyage. And for us who remain, who have faced so many perils of storm and wreck, and for whom the sun must be now far down the western sky, the poet's prayer appeals to our sailor instinct as well as to our aspirations for the immortal life:

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar  
When I put out to sea;

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
    Too full for noise and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
    Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
    And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell  
    When I embark.

For though from out our bourne of Time and Place  
    The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
    When I have crossed the bar.

I

ON THE WAY OUT





## ON THE WAY OUT.

To the novice on the deck of a man-of-war everything is strange and some things are startling. Having thus far wended his way through life as a landlubber, the transition to ship, sea, sailors and storms is somewhat bewildering. It takes time to learn the names and uses of the tangled tracery around him. And when at last he can discriminate between the mizzen to' gallant brace and the foretopmast stun'sail halliard, he can be credited with a brave beginning. The big guns, portholes, armchests, cutlass racks, carbines, boarding pikes and other belligerent contrivances suggest a martial contrast to the peaceful atmosphere of his former life on shore. And the tipsy deck, swelling canvas and webs of cordage strike him as quite unlike the solid old home of his boyhood, which staid where it was put and never threatened to spill him out. Our craft was an old timer; not a modern gun-boat nor an armored cruiser; but an old-fashioned sloop of war, a full-rigged ship, equipped with a ponderous battery of twenty-two guns—eighteen thirty-twos and

four sixty-eights; no modern languid luxuries; no new-fangled aids of electricity; in fact we went equipped with lightning conductors on fore and main masts on purpose to ward off all such electricity as we might happen to encounter; no steam, save that which ascended in fragrant incense from the ship's coppers. Her driving force came from no such common and profane thing as steam, engendered in iron boilers and set as a slave to drive pistons and turn cranks; but from the sweet free winds of heaven that played upon her sails and swelled them into curves of beauty. She was a handsome craft; and when clothed in snowy white from deck to royal-mast-head, bending before the blast and driving on over the green seas and through the sparkling foam, she made a superb picture that even a landsman would admire. Her complement counted up to two hundred and ten — twenty-two officers and one hundred and eighty-eight in the crew. My place in this muster-roll was that of the captain's clerk; a youngster just out of college, serving Uncle Sam presumably from patriotism, but mainly with an eye to Uncle Sam's gold wherewith to pay off college debts. In close relations with a good-natured commander the clerk may have great advantages of observation; and accordingly the

chronicles of adventure set forth in these pages are the testimony of an eye-witness to the principal scenes described.

We got underway from Hampton Roads in September, 1850, bound for the underside of the world. We were to relieve the *St. Mary's* or some other long absent member of our squadron in the East Indies, and then stay as long ourselves. In the end it proved much longer. Before night of the first day out we had sunk the capes of the Chesapeake and left the whole broadside of the continent hull down on the western horizon. Alone on the sea, and "visited all night by troops of stars." It may not be worth philosophizing about, but to this day solemn strains of music will always call up the vision of a ship setting forth alone on the long journey over the infinite waste, sailing out from the protecting homeland into the mysterious future, knowing well that she is to run the gauntlet of reefs and shoals and storms, but not knowing whether she will bear herself bravely through all perils and proudly return, or will end her voyage and her life in the depths of the sea. There is melody in the accompaniments of the voyage itself; the piping and twittering of soft airs through the rigging, the tinkle of silver ripples lapping the bows, the drowsy hum of the

men at their work, the rat-ta-tattoo of the reef-points on the topsails, the shrill blasts of the gale, the keen fife notes of the boatswain's whistle, the answering shouts from aloft, the roaring diapason of the waves, the swash and crackle and thunder of great watery masses sweeping in over the bulwarks or rushing aft into the seething wake — these sounds of the sea make a rough symphony that will at any moment set the blood tingling in a sailor's veins. It may be that the echoes of that noisy life now far receding still send through the chambers of memory their faint throbbing pulsations of sound. Or it may be that the music of it all is only a touch of remembered sentiment. That far-away past was luminous then with the hopes of youth and the promise of adventure; it is hallowed now with memories of a life that is vanished and of friends that are gone.

Alone on the sea; yet not in absolute solitude, for we had a welcome from shoals of porpoises that gambolled around, flying fish that skittered along the crests of the waves, an occasional surly shark, and flocks of gulls and petrels that made the welkin lively with their curvettings and chattering. Our voyage was a kind of royal progress, attended by a nimble retinue of the denizens of the deep, all animated by the same tender interest

in whatever savory morsels might be thrown overboard by the mess cooks and left floating in our wake.

The first thing was to make sufficient easting and so catch the trades; whose genial gales sent us bowling down the Atlantic and well into the peaceful tropical main that Spanish sailors used to call *el golfo de las damas* — the ladies' sea — because in those gentle waters one could entrust the helm to a young girl without danger. Of course we met Neptune, trident and all. We were honored with a visit from his briny majesty when we crossed the line, and our fresh-water sailors who had never crossed before were duly initiated by his aqueous myrmidons. Below the line the southeast trades swept us smoothly along into the magnificent bay of Rio de Janeiro. There we exchanged naval courtesies with the frigates *Congress* and *Raritan*; bustled around the city on tours of observation, or on shopping and foraging trips; went to the opera to see their majesties the emperor and empress of Brazil; climbed the peak of Corcovado; and then freighted with sweet memories of tropical scenery and luscious fruit cut across the Atlantic to the rocky and sandy contrasts of South Africa. Our first port was Saldanha bay, some twenty leagues north of Cape



Town; a superb landlocked basin, and like the great bay of Rio well worthy of its fame as one of the finest natural harbors in the world. Sweeping in from the tumbling ocean outside you find yourself floating on a broad and deep estuary like a placid lake that reaches some twenty miles in among the hills. When we entered it was deserted and still; not a hut nor a tree in sight; the low brown sandy hills overspread with brush; the waters dappled with swarms of wildfowl that appeared in fluttering clouds from the sea. It had not always been a solitude. Two centuries ago Saldanha bay was a busy half-way station for the great convoys of merchantmen that called here to rest and recruit on their way to the distant east; and more than once it thundered and smoked with terrific battles between Dutch and English squadrons that here hunted each other to the death. They were contending for the primacy of the Cape; a bloody prelude to the more recent struggles in the Transvaal. All this has now faded into the dim past. The great harbor bears again the peaceful messengers of commerce and its shores are alive with a thrifty population whose broad wheat farms mantle the hills and valleys with gold. In a mild way some of us youngsters woke again the echoes of war, trying it on the spring-

bok, the beautiful little "gazelle of the south," which ever and anon darted up from our path. But the dear creatures were too nimble for us, and bolted over and under the brush with such lightning speed that by the time we could bring our clumsy muskets to bear where they were, they were somewhere else.

Cape Town readily furnished us the supplies which Saldanha bay could not. Ten days of town life under the lee of Table mountain made a comfortable prologue to the blustering Cape of Good Hope — much more accurately described by its original title, the Cape of Storms. We did not run down to the "roaring forties" to get by, though one would think so from the fury and foam; for a tearing gale drove us around and gave us a vigorous shove up the Indian Ocean. Sixty days more of sunshine and storm brought us to our next halting place, a Malay island on the northern edge of the Banda sea. This was Bouro, one of the Spice islands. The port was Cajelie bay — rechristened by our irreverent tars Catch-helly bay, because we drove into it before a furious rain-squall which nearly piled us on a reef before we could get our anchor down. A beautiful spot, rich with tropical verdure, mountainous, balmy, aromatic. In size it is just one third as large as

the State of Vermont; and as some of its peaks rise to a height of more than eight thousand feet the scenery is superb. We found there a solitary European, the Dutch Resident, deputy and factor of the power that holds so many of those fertile gardens of the east; around him Malay tribes who occupy the seacoast rim of the island, while the interior is tenanted by those mysterious aborigines the Alfuras. Our business in this small paradise was to wood and water ship. And while that task was going forward, other incidents happened which helped to keep up the supply of ozone in the atmosphere of the steerage. Did you ever buy potatoes of a king? If not, try Bouro; you will find it as easy as forming a trust or selling a mine. One morning a brace of port steerage youngsters landed and sallied into the village in quest of plantains, yams, fruit, or anything legitimately edible in our somewhat fastidious mess. For legal tender we carried fresh from the purser's storeroom a new jackknife and a bright tin pan. Sauntering along the street we came upon one enclosure that seemed larger and more tidy than the rest, in which a few natives were lolling at their ease. They rose and graciously welcomed us in. We made known our errand by signs; whereupon the venerable proprietor took our bas-

ket and filled it heaping with sweet potatoes and fruit, and received in exchange the coveted jack-knife and pan. The next day we were to receive the king of Bouro on board and fire a salute in his honor. As we were all drawn up in uniform on the quarter deck and his russet majesty appeared over the gangway in Malay regalia, who should he be but our friend of the day before, the proud possessor of the knife and pan! As long as those nutritious tubers lasted we reflected with pride on our close contact with royalty, and agreed that we had never tasted potatoes of a more regal flavor.

Another adventure brought with it a pretty moral. I was strolling alone on the beach one day, and presently noticed that I was followed by a tawny native. He had an ugly creese slung at his belt, which I took as an impressive sign that he might bear watching, and therefore kept my weather eye on his movements. Just ahead a magnificent tree overhung the beach, as large as a New England maple, its tropical verdure suffused with brilliant crimson, and the sands beneath gorgeously carpeted with the petals which had snowed down from the branches above. I stooped and picked up a blossom to examine it, when he of the creese ran up and tapped me on the shoulder, took the flower from my hand, went through

the motions of smelling and eating it, and then represented the effect of the poison. I never saw more perfect acting. His cheeks blanched into a ghastly livid pallor, his eyes rolled up, and he seemed to be dying in the mere effort to simulate death. It was a lesson in charity that I never forgot. Instead of cutting me down with his creese he opened his human heart and warned me of danger. We became brothers and friends on the spot.

Floating through the East Indian archipelago is like a dream of a fairy world. On every hand islands buried under a rank profusion of verdure, some of them mere islets like baskets of flowers drifting on the sea, some of them of continental size and piled with mountain ranges, like Java; occasionally a smoking volcano, whose distant glow by night gave us the friendly aid of a natural lighthouse; the air laden with fragrance from unknown plants and fruits hidden in the rank groves on shore — among them the peerless mangosteen, with a composite flavor of strawberry, orange and heaven commingled; gentle breezes wafting us from one romantic scene to another, and slowly pushing us on through fairy land toward our ultimate goal in Cathay. The *Saratoga* being a man-of-war and not a merchant-

man, there was no danger of our idyllic voyage being halted by a fleet of piratical proas popping round a headland and dashing upon us in quest of plunder and blood.

We took the Gilolo passage, or rather the passage took us, and crossing the line in longitude 129° E. we swept out into the Pacific and made our way north under sunny skies by day and the full moon by night. Our first glimpse of savages, the pure unadulterated article, was interesting. We were passing two level islets some five degrees north of the line — voyagers in those distant seas would recognize them by their names on the chart, Pulo Anna and Pulo Mariere — when a score of canoes came prancing out over the waves laden with bananas and cocoanuts for barter. The men stood to their paddles, and were tall, erect, splendid samples of stalwart manhood. Tailors were at a discount in their community; most of them wore only a loincloth, some of them indeed *decolleté* to their toes. Their light olive brown contrasted finely with the great green waves, and many of them heightened the effect still further by being embellished from head to foot with flamboyant tattooing. We bought and ate their cocoanuts, and presumed they would like to eat us. We should have disagreed with them, or at least tried



to; and yet one could imagine a much worse fate than to be entombed in such handsome beasts.

All this time we were scuttling north in a clear sea. Our future clients, the Philippines, were to the west of our course far out of sight. We made them a call the next year, enjoyed their tropical scenery, revelled in their fruit, made friends with the Tagallos, laid in Manila cheroots galore, and invested in peña dresses for girl friends at home; all the time without a suspicion of any deeper and more personal interest which the future might bring to us in those charming islands. But that was years before Aguinaldo was born, and Admiral Dewey was not yet even a sub-middy at Annapolis. In due time we rounded the northern end of Luzon, raced through the Balintang straits before a ten knot breeze, passed the Balintang islands, towering crags at whose base the Pacific was hammering with tremendous roar, and signaled our entrance into the China seas by taking a header into the rear end of a typhoon. Luckily we did not hurt the typhoon nor the typhoon hurt us; but the experience could hardly be called playful. A day or two of ugly cross seas — cross in every sense — a ripping tempest, hatches battened down, life-lines led along the guns, decks swept fore and aft, the poor old wallowing ship

punched, pounded, staggering, almost buried in the waves; everything wet, dirty, dismal; if anybody thinks it such a jolly lark, this going to sea, just come out to China and try a typhoon. But we pulled through, and so did the ship, and so did the sun, which blessed old public functionary kindly dried us up and warmed our hearts. Three days after we were wafted by gentle breezes in among the islands that fringe the southern coast of the Central Flowery Kingdom.

As we were slowly working our way through their serpentine channels, one of my messmates, a midshipman, sitting in the slings of the fore-topsail yard, beckoned me to come up and join him. We were neither of us handsome enough to pose as "the sweet little cherub that sits up aloft," nor angelic enough to "keep watch for the life of poor Jack;" but a hundred feet above the deck made a superb outlook, and we idled away a long cosy sunny afternoon taking a birdseye view of the outer rim of the Celestial Empire. All around us the waters were dotted with multitudinous fishing craft and sampans ambling their way to and fro. Farther off we could descry ranges of hills, picturesque forests, cultivated fields, busy villages, the whole landscape teeming with tokens of a populous empire; and over all one could imagine the shade

of Confucius hovering with spectral benediction. Drifting quietly onward and threading the crooked passages that wind toward Macao, we reached that quaint old Portuguese city at last and dropped anchor in the roadstead a couple of miles off the Praya. It was Tuesday, the eighth of April, 1851; seven months and twenty thousand miles by log from home.

II

THE FATE OF THE DONNA MARIA



## THE FATE OF THE DONNA MARIA.

IN that open roadstead we lay rolling at our anchors sometimes for weeks at a time. Two years of waltzing to and fro and flitting up and down the coast, over to Manila, and up to the Madjicosima islands, intervened before the advent of Commodore Perry's Japan Expedition, which as events proved the *Saratoga* would be kept to join. Whenever we returned to southern China from any of these sallies abroad we divided our favors between Macao, Hongkong,<sup>1</sup> Whampoa, Cum-sing-mun, and the Boca Tigris. Of all these ports Macao is the most exposed. The winds have full sweep over a broad expanse and can raise at their own sweet will a choppy larruping sea. When you are lying at anchor off Macao therefore you are literally "rocked in the cradle of the deep."

<sup>1</sup> It was at Hongkong—in one of our many visitations there—that we saw the Italian patriot, Garibaldi. He came beating up the harbor in command of a Peruvian barque, and as we heard his ringing voice and watched his masterful evolutions we all agreed that if he was a great soldier he was an equally good sailor. He had escaped from Italy and was just then finding employment in South America; to return two years later to his native soil to take a hand in the next revolution. As he was to sail for San Francisco we sent a letter bag home by him; and more than one of my correspondents had the pleasure of receiving letters that had been borne across the Pacific by the great champion of free Italy. It is not every day you can have a Garibaldi for your mail-carrier!



The first experience that happened to us in that thumping bumping cradle was delicious. We of the steerage — middies, past midshipmen and clerk — slept in hammocks; and as we swayed with the swing of the ship we were not only rocked to sleep but oftentimes sung to sleep by a submarine serenade — a sort of music in solution. The performers were myriads of little fishes, and sweeter lullaby no man could wish. Macao was the only port where we enjoyed these liquid concerts, though very likely musical fishes may frequent other points on the Chinese coast. Travellers have heard them off the rivers of Cambodia to the south, along the shores of Ceylon, and on some parts of the African coast. Charles Kingsley heard them in the West Indies. Others have noted them along our southern Atlantic coast, in the gulf of Mexico, and up and down the shores of the Pacific. There appear to be many varieties and different grades of subaqueous musicians — from the grunting gurnard and purring sea-horse to the deep-sea drum-fish and the “mysterious music of the Pascagoula.” Why should there not be diverse tones in a fish orchestra as in a man orchestra? Why should not the troubadours of the deep have their horns, oboes, flutes, harps, kettle-drums, triangles, and the rest, like

their brothers of the wind and string on land? The weird sounds which Kingsley heard as he listened from the veranda of a friend's house on the isle of Monos were like this: "Between the howls of the wind I became aware of a strange noise from seaward—a booming, or rather humming, most like that which a locomotive sometimes makes when blowing off steam. It was faint and distant, but deep and strong enough to set one guessing its cause." He hears the same sound the next morning in a dead calm, and learns from the natives "that it came from under the water and was most probably made by none other than the famous musical or drum-fish, of whom one had heard and hardly believed much in past years." He quotes the description given by another observer, who while on board a schooner at anchor off Chaguaramas heard a variety of notes. "Immediately under the vessel I heard a deep and not unpleasant sound, similar to those one might imagine to proceed from a thousand *Æolian* harps; this ceased, and deep twanging notes succeeded; these gradually swelled into an uninterrupted stream of singular sounds like the booming of a number of Chinese gongs under the water; to these succeeded notes that had a faint resemblance to a wild chorus of a

hundred human voices singing out of tune in deep bass." Kingsley refers to still another listener, on the Pacific coast and up the rivers of Ecuador, who heard the music from the water and at first thought the sound "was produced by a fly or hornet of extraordinary size; but afterward, having advanced a little farther, he heard a multitude of different voices which harmonized together, imitating a church organ to great perfection."<sup>1</sup> A naval officer who heard this submarine music at the mouth of a river in Cambodia says it sounded like "a mixture of the bass of an organ, the ringing of bells, the guttural cries of a large frog, and the tones of an enormous harp."<sup>2</sup> Other comparisons have been used. A visitor in Mississippi was called down to the river one day by an old fisherman, "to hear the spirits singing under the water." It was "the mysterious music of the Pascagoula." Out of the depths of the river "rose a roaring, murmuring sound which gradually increased in strength and volume, then diminished;" "a strange tremulous sound," like the humming of telegraph wires; and again "a roaring, rushing sound." The writer even illustrates the notes by a musical scale; sometimes

<sup>1</sup> Charles Kingsley. *At Last; a Christmas in the West Indies*. pp. 157-161.

<sup>2</sup> *Popular Science Monthly*, xxiii; p. 571.

there were different tones in harmony, and rising from the keynote to an octave above; sometimes quick sharp sounds in single notes or in pairs; and at any sudden noise, like the splashing of an oar, the music would instantly cease. Another observer says, "a low plaintive sound is heard rising and falling like that of an Æolian harp;" "the sounds are sweet and plaintive, but monotonous."<sup>1</sup> And still another, cruising in his yacht along the shores of Florida a dozen years ago, writes that while at anchor in Old Tampa bay he heard "a single note, continuous for a long time. It recalled the singing of telegraph wires, or the hum of a planing mill, or the music of an Æolian harp." It had no resemblance to the drum-fish, which he says is common in Florida and whose note is "a booming, interrupted noise."<sup>2</sup>

It is quite a surprise to the lay mind — and that is the sort I carry — to find how many fishes are known to science as endowed with vocal powers. While engaged in hunting up and making the acquaintance of some of these scaly sirens on my own independent hook, a literary friend has called my attention to a number of scientific authorities, who count up more than fifty kinds. I could give the reader a list of them — or at least

<sup>1</sup> *Popular Science Monthly*, xxxvi : pp. 791-794.

<sup>2</sup> *Popular Science Monthly*, xxxvii ; p. 410.

of the fishy prima donnas—all in their Latin dress, which would be immensely learned and edifying; but it might take me beyond my depth, as the fish are already, so I will be discreet and refrain.

It was surely not the drumfish, nor the barking dogfish, nor the grunting gurnard, that used to serenade us in Macao roads on those still, tropical star-lighted nights. Our music came from another section of the finny orchestra — perhaps from the string quartette rather than the brass band and kettle-drums. It was a gentle tinkling or gurgling as of the breaking of silvery bubbles all over the bottom of the ship, or like the ringing of myriads of little bells down under the deep. I am inclined to think the music was produced by schools of mullet; and if so they would have been even more welcome in the frying pan than at the harpsichord. The tones floated around us by the hour together — sometimes swelling into a deep and solemn strain, sometimes faintly pattering like the feet of fairies dancing. Had I been born a poet I should have set the music to rhyme; but being only one of Uncle Sam's youngsters, a prosy clerk, it lulled me to sleep, and perhaps rippled through my dreams with echoes of home.

One can understand a chorus of frogs in a swamp, or the matins and vespers of birds in for-

est and field. But what was this? Have the tribes of the wave a language, which they use as we do ours? Or is it merely an instinct, an impulse to put into action some curious power they find they possess? — and so in their exuberance every little fish goes to pounding, pattering, tinkling, murmuring, dancing with all his might at his own sweet will and without reference to his myriad brother minnows in the same shoal. Perhaps it may be the call of love. Since Venus was born on the wave, she may have left the briny deep all tinctured with an infusion of love and all the finny tribes touched with the spell. May not even fish have their pretty ways of attracting the admiration of their scaly paramours? And if so, what could be prettier and sweeter than this? This is what Darwin makes it. Yet sometimes it is such a mournful monotone that one thinks of a dirge instead; whole circles of family friends may have been scooped in the dragnet and fallen a prey to the voracity of that monster, man — and the tearful survivors may be celebrating a submarine mass for the repose of the victims in the monster's stomach. Or if those mermaids have a religion, this liquid music may be the worship they offer to Neptune; or possibly their vain endeavor to placate and win their arch-enemy, man.



So much for our first experience in the Central Flowery Kingdom. Our second was of quite another sort.

The sloop-of-war *St. Mary's* which we had come to China to relieve had sailed on her return voyage without waiting for us, and Captain Walker found himself the senior officer on the station. Finding it agreeable on shore and having no commodore to order him off to sea, he accepted an invitation to exist for a while on the cool verandas of Consul De Silva, and sent off orders to get the ship round into the Typa. This is a placid expanse separated from the main roadstead by Typa island and well protected by other islands from the unmannerly winds which at times make the outer harbor so rough. It took several tides and an immense amount of kedge-hauling, boatswain whistling and capstan work to warp the *Saratoga* in over the two shallow bars; but the bars were soft mud, and she dragged through without harm. When at last she shook herself free, with all sail set and driven by a lively breeze and the stentorian voice of our first lieutenant she flew to her berth and executed a pretty "flying moor;" a beautiful evolution which used to be a fancy trick with the old-timers, but in these degenerate days of steam has, I presume, fallen into "innocuous desuetude."

This transfer to the *Typha* was not a matter of thrilling interest in itself, but it did put us in contact with a startling bit of history which deserves recording. It is to be found now I imagine only in the naval archives at Lisbon; perhaps long ago forgotten even there.

Our berth was between the U. S. S. *Marion* on the one side and on the other the remains of a Portuguese frigate, the *Donna Maria*, whose blackened timbers bore silent witness to her melancholy fate. It was only five months before — October 29, 1850 — that she met her doom. It was the birthday of the queen of Portugal. In honor of the day both ships were dressed from stem to stern in the flags of all nations and presented a brilliant picture of emblazonry. At noon the frigate fired a royal salute, which was answered by the *Marion* and by the forts on shore. On board the *Marion* the guns were secured, the crew were piped to dinner, the messes were cleared, and the long sultry afternoon began to wear placidly away. The men were gathered in little groups between the guns sewing, reading, spinning yarns, or sleeping in the shade. The clean white decks, the awnings spread, the boats at the booms with a boatkeeper in each, the officer of the deck quietly pacing his watch, most of the other officers taking their siesta

below — such familiar details will serve to complete the picture of routine man-o'-war life in the tropics. In the midst of this tranquil scene and without a moment's warning a terrific explosion brought every man to his feet. Wakened by the shock and supposing the *Marion* had for some unaccountable reason received a broadside from the frigate, the first lieutenant rushed on deck in his pajamas shouting "Clear away the batteries!" But instead the frigate herself had blown up, and as the smoke drifted away the real horror was recognized. All that saved the *Marion* was the fact that she lay so near. Almost everything went over her. Two big guns went roaring between her masts, with a volcanic shower of bolts, dead-eyes, broken spars, and fragments of human bodies. One of the guns fell within a few feet of her, and threw back on board a furious splash of spray. The whole atmosphere was thick with torn missiles, tangled debris of planks, rigging, blocks, spars, sails, handspikes, battle-axes, and all the diversified paraphernalia that enter into the make-up of a man-of-war. Over a circuit of a mile in diameter around the smoking frigate the calm waters were churned into roar and foam by the descending shower. The boats were instantly called away and dashed to the scene in order to extricate from the

tangle of cordage and burning timbers any victims in whom there might still be left a sign of life. The work of rescue soon lapsed into the more solemn task of gathering the dead. Out of the entire crew of two hundred and fifty only five remained, one Portuguese, two Chinamen and two Lascars. A second explosion, of a small deck magazine, drove the boats from their labor. After it was seen that no life remained the burning ship was left to her fate. As the soundings were but little over three fathoms she could not sink beneath the surface, but resting on the bottom, in the course of the night she burned to the water's edge.

The *Marion* suffered no damage beyond a broken arm or two and a few bruises, a boat stove at the booms, the awnings slashed, and both awnings and snowy deck bespattered with blood. Her men were often sobered by the gruesome sight of bodies that for days after went floating past, until gathered up and buried by the Portuguese patrol boats; and one day the sentry at the gangway was horrified at the sudden rising of a Portuguese sentry from the deep alongside, with musket still grimly held at "carry arms" as in life.

The fate of the *Donna Maria* will probably remain a mystery to the end of time. No man

knows whence came the spark that fired her magazine. The magazine had been opened that noon of course, to get the ammunition for the salute. But the explosion did not come till two or three hours later; and such an interval, together with the stringent regulations that control the handling of explosives on a man-of-war, would seem to preclude the theory of an accident. The commander of the frigate was commonly reputed to be a man of despotic and passionate temper; and the story was current in Macao that for some cause, real or fancied, he flew into a rage with the gunner, sent for him to his cabin, cursed him, pulled his beard and even assaulted him with kicks and blows. The gunner replied that he had been many years in the service and had never been subjected to such indignities before; that he was an old man and had not long to live, but that when he did die many more should go to hell with him; with which threat he left the captain's presence. Brooding over the treatment he had received, and as many believed becoming crazed with anger, he may have taken the opportunity of the salute and when he closed the magazine left a lighted fuse which in time reached the powder and sent the ship to her doom. But he went with the rest — and no man knows.

### III

## AFTER MUTINEERS IN PATCHUNG SAN





## AFTER MUTINEERS IN PATCHUNGSA

OUR business in China was to protect the interests of American citizens and American commerce in the East. The Taiping rebellion had already started in the southern provinces, and our first active duty was to visit Whampoa and put our merchants in Canton under the protection of American guns. Later the same year we strolled over to Manila and spent a lazy month amid its torrid luxuries. But neither of these is the subject of my story. Manila has written her own record since, and the Taipings will keep; we can return to them later. Just now we will look in on a group of emerald isles some three hundred miles off the Celestial coast.

In the spring of 1852 an American ship, the *Robert Browne*, sailed from Amoy with a cargo of coolies for San Francisco. Some weeks out the coolies rose upon the crew, murdered all but five, and compelled the survivors to navigate the ship back to China. By the time they sighted the Madjicosimas on their return they had become panic-stricken at the possible consequences of

their crime, and concluded to take refuge on the islands. The sailors made for Patchungsa accordingly, and grounding the ship on a reef near the shore manned the long-boat and began ferrying the mutineers to the beach. Some three hundred of them were thus landed, and the boat came back for the last twenty-five. Instead of taking them ashore, however, the Yankee tars dashed up over the gangway and seizing the nearest handspikes and belaying pins overpowered the coolies and lashed them to ringbolts in the deck. Then they ran to the braces, rounded in the fore and main yards, backed the ship off the reef and squared away for the open sea, leaving the crowds of baffled mutineers like a pack of savages yelling, cursing, tearing up and down the beach in impotent rage. It was some three or four hundred miles to Amoy, and thither with their perilous freight they directed their course. Never daring to sleep, scarcely snatching a moment to eat, they kept their vigils by night and by day, at the wheel, on the lookout, at the braces, watching the sails and the weather, standing sentry over their prisoners. Many times did the miscreants gnaw their fastenings and threaten another tragedy like the first, but were as often refettered. Fortunately no storm darkened the sky. Fortu-

nately too, as they approached the coast half a dozen mates of merchantmen lying at anchor in Amoy were out on a rollicking cruise down the harbor when the *Robert Browne* hove in sight. She was behaving strangely and her flag was union down. Plainly something was the matter, and these tough-fisted pleasure seekers dashed out over the waves to see. Not a moment too soon; for as they mounted over the rail the prisoners had just torn themselves free and were in the act of charging on their exhausted captors, who in a few seconds more would have been food for sharks. Like a thunderbolt the rescuers were upon them, and once more the baffled coolies were firmly secured to the deck.

When we reached Amoy the *Robert Browne* was lying quietly at anchor, and the prisoners were turned over to us. Two days later an English man-of-war, the brig *Lily*, returned from the islands with another score, and these also were added to our charge. She had found the mutineers in a woful plight, sick, desperate, half-starved. The natives, a gentle inoffensive people, had helped them put up bamboo barracks near the shore, and there they were living on whatever the islanders not overfed themselves could bring them. When the *Lily* appeared round the point they recognized

her as a messenger of doom and scuttled incontinently for the forest-clad mountains in the interior; so terrified that, as the interpreter declared, no less than forty of those who could not keep up with their fleeing comrades, took their own lives or fell and died from sheer exhaustion.

It was to gather in another batch of these poor wretches that the *Saratoga* was ordered on a cruise to the Madjicosimas. Three days' sail from Amoy, rounding the northern end of Formosa, and wafted over smooth seas by kindly breezes, we found ourselves in a beautiful cluster of islands, of which Patchungsan, named from its "eight huge hills," was not only the chief but the fairest. That was our destination. A charming picture it made as we approached; mountains draped with tropical verdure, in which one could distinguish the breadfruit, the acacia, the broad fronds of the palm, and even the familiar Norway pine; and sloping down from the hills to the shore were green fields, separated sometimes by deep glades and watercourses, sometimes by craggy fences of coral. We wondered whether such lovely scenery could be conscious of holding in its placid bosom a nest of bloody bandits. We rounded to in the spacious harbor, dropped anchor, furled sails, and sent a boat on shore.

There stood the bamboo barracks, just as they had been described to us. We watched the party of natives who met our interpreter on the beach and took him up to one of the huts for a palaver. It proved to be as on the arrival of H. M. brig *Lily*. The birds had flown. The apparition of another avenging fury in the shape of another man-of-war lent wings to their terror, and all but the sick and dying had bolted again for the woods in the wildest helter-skelter of alarm. When the boat returned with such information as was obtainable, the captain decided to send out an expedition or two in pursuit. Every man on board was eager to volunteer. It would be such a lark; it was just going ashore on liberty, in a wild tropical island, and with a spice of adventure thrown in. Some four or five score of the men were selected for the privilege.

The next morning the sun rose in a cloudless sky. The island with its beauties of mountain, valley, forest and lawn lay peacefully spread before us with scarcely a breath of air to ruffle the verdure of its fragrant thickets; and circling around it the liquid sea, as innocent and bland as if it had never been conscious of such a thing as a storm. On such a placid day one almost listened for the home church bells, for it was Sun-



day. But no Sunday for us, and no church bells; instead, a hustling day of martial order and disorder. On shore, hid in the caverns, lurking in the bush, housed in the huts, were the fugitive mutineers; on board ship the din, bustle and turmoil of preparations to catch them. The organization of a night campaign, the necessary equipment and drill, together with the complex labors of the commissariat, turned the gentle Sunday into chaos. Officers were assigned and four divisions were told off, numbering each some score or more of doughty warriors. On deck the leaders were mustering their men; sergeants and corporals were putting awkward squads through the manual, quarter-gunnery were distributing muskets, pistols and cutlasses, the sailmaker's gang were stitching haversacks of canvas, and mess cooks below were concocting the rations to fill them; while glowering aloof in sullen disappointment rejected volunteers strolled to and fro, gazing idly over the bulwarks, affecting indifference, and consigning to the everlasting shades the whole blooming enterprise.

By nine o'clock at night the armament began embarking and by eleven the last man was on shore. There the guides met them and the four parties began their long and devious tramp in the dark. The outlaws had fled up the valleys, over

the hills, through the woods, among the rocks, caves, mountain passes, wherever fear drove them or hope held out the promise of shelter. But up the valleys, over the hills, through the woods, among the rocks, caves and mountain passes, like the avenging spirit of Cain their pursuers steadily followed on their track. As I did not have the pleasure of accompanying this "personally conducted" tour, but did go in the second expedition, I will not undertake to penetrate the darkness of that night and imagine adventures which I did not share. The party returned the next day bringing some fifty more of the fugitives, who were duly added to our list.

Meanwhile all the prisoners were taken on shore and snugly quartered in the bamboo barracks, with relays of sentries from our marine guard pacing their beat around them. It looked really quite martial. Tuesday morning opened bright, with a spanking fresh breeze and a lively sea, but neither of them rampant enough to interrupt the flying boats which were conveying orders and provender to the party on shore. In the last boat that pushed off from the gangway that morning a couple of youngsters from the port steerage mess started for a morning stroll. After so many salt water duckings we cherished ambitions for a fresh

water bath, if the island could boast a stream big enough; and anyhow a frolic on the greensward would limber up our sea-legs. We got what we were after—and a lot more. That boat was the last to reach the shore for two mortal days. We were safely on *terra firma*, and there we had to stay through a villainous typhoon. The barometer was somewhat demoralized when we left the ship. But that was in the cabin; and as we had no barometer in the steerage—only took such weather as was dealt out to us—we had started on our tramp in blissful ignorance. First of all a look at our prisoners in the bamboo barracks. Poor knaves—there they were, nearly a hundred of them, old and young, sick and well, huddled together on the earth floor of the building, whose roof of thatch shielded them from the torrid sun, while the open sides admitted the cool breeze. The more defiant were in double irons, the weaker only manacled; the sick and the boys were at large. Some appeared dazed by the calamity that had overtaken them, and lay prostrate on their straw mats heedless of what was passing around. A few ugly-visaged ruffians, afterwards identified as among the ringleaders of the mutiny, sat bolt upright among their companions, reckless of the crime and scornfully indifferent to its retribution.

One little chap some ten years old was lying on the ground covered with a tattered mat, the last ray of hope fled from his boyish face, the dripping tears telling more plainly than words what despair had settled on his young heart. When we carried him to his home in Amoy a month or two after, kind treatment had transformed him into another child and we could hardly persuade him to leave his new friends.

The freshening breeze piped and whistled over the grassy hills as we left the camp for a stroll. It was an interesting country. We peeped into the cave on the point, much to the displeasure of its tenants the bats, made morning calls on the simple natives in their neatly thatched huts, climbed a crag for the view, strayed into a deserted temple whose Dagon had fallen from the crumbling altar and whose devotees brought no more oblations of smoking incense; and all the while exploring the landscape for that freshwater brook in which we were to take that freshwater bath. No brook appeared; but we got the bath all the same, of very fresh water, and in overwhelming abundance.

Back to the shore, hoping for a boat from the ship. No boat. No chance for a boat. Wind increasing. Horizon murky and lurid. A dirty

scud beginning to drive through the sky. The sun tried for a time to burn through in spots, and finding itself shut out of its own firmament by nasty clouds finally withdrew in dudgeon to parts unknown. The gale was rising, and before long a sharp drizzle was sweeping through the air on the yelling blasts that penetrated our dapper white costume and cut like showers of needles. We were glad enough to flee for shelter to the big cabin where the guard was quartered. In the course of the afternoon we attempted to build a rookery of our own. The tempest laughed itself hoarse at our efforts. Nothing we could put up was any protection against the pitiless rain. And presently an ill-mannered blast ripped up the whole fabric and blew its fragments out of sight. It was by a logical necessity therefore—hurricane logic, not easy to answer—that we spent that roaring night in the big cabin with the guard. Wet, tired and sore, we tried to bury ourselves in a scant pile of straw down in the corner and shiver ourselves to sleep. It was a kind of cold storage, and the drowsy goddess had no notion of being wooed in that fashion. The weary night dragged slowly on, and would have been more interminable still but for a sudden alarm that the hungry pirates were coming down on the camp

for a foraging attack. All hands hustled out to meet them. We congratulated ourselves that the exercise would at least keep us warm. The attack did not materialize. All the comfort we got out of it was that the officer of the guard gave us each a cutlass, and the belt tightly buckled around our equatorial regions made life a trifle less wintry. The only other episode of that miserable night was the sudden outcry of a rough old salt, "Corporal of the guard! there's a son-of-a-gun a hangin' himself!" One of the prisoners, tired of his misery and uncertain as to what further retribution might be in store for him, decided to take himself out of the case, and with the long folds of his turban thrown over a bamboo rafter, made a vigorous push for the unseen. He was easily cut down and persuaded to resume his earthly pilgrimage for a while longer.

At daybreak we struggled outside, at the risk of being blown into the next lot. Whoop! how that hurricane scoured over sea and land, yelling, screeching, foaming at the mouth, cutting off the tops of the waves and hurling them through the air. It was magnificent, but tragic and grim. The poor ship had spent as uncomfortable a night as we. There she lay wallowing, all her top hamper down on deck, three anchors out ahead, now



rising wearily over the enormous billows and then plunging headlong to bury herself in a smother of spray, tugging at her chains like a Titan, as if determined to tear them away and rush to her doom on the reef astern. The big waves came piling in from the sea in indescribable masses, raging, furious, passionate, literally tumbling over each other in the mad rush to get at her, plunging on the ship like demons, trying to overwhelm her and send her to the bottom, or roaring past to break on the reef in towering hills of foam. That reef was the loop which united the island with its nearest neighbor, Kokiensan; there was nothing beyond but the wild Pacific, and no passage through. If those cables should give way, five minutes would seal her doom and that of every living thing on board. On that frightful coral bridge the pounding of those surges would smash her to atoms. Such a fate for our shipmates set our hearts to thumping. We watched the conflict for hours with breathless interest; and all the more dismally because such a catastrophe would leave us, a handful of white men, on an island far out of the track of passing ships, and with those three hundred mutineers in the mountains in our rear, disappointed, hungry, savage and desperate. It was a funereal day, that

Like a wounded snake dragged its slow length along.

But at last it came to an end. Things generally do. The most furious blasts began to tame down. The murky heavens began to lose something of their sullen blackness. The rain squalls came thinner and weaker. The typhoon began to show signs of exhaustion as if it had about blown itself out. By nightfall of the second day nature was tired of chaos and wanted to rest. The kindly natives brought us riceballs to keep us from starving, and then helped us rebuild our demolished hut. Into the straw we bundled and knew nothing more until at daybreak a middy shouted in our ears, "Tumble out there, sleepers! boat coming ashore!" Getting back on board was like getting home. The first lieutenant had the deck, and all hands were at the capstan bars heaving up the extra anchors. All hands had a chance to witness the prodigals' return. As we mounted over the gangway and waddled aft to report ourselves to the smiling officer, our spandy white toggery turned to a bedraggled butternut gray, all hands smiled with him, some of them audibly. But we dove below and soon got back into civilization and clean clothes.

The second expedition was another midnight prow like the first. I hastened to volunteer, but

with an ardor that would hardly pass for patriotic or even martial. The island was said to abound in pigeons; and having risen to the dignity of caterer to the port steerage mess, my quest was not pirates but game. It was not unreasonable to expect that while the rest of the cohort were scooping up the mutineers a few pigeons would obligingly put themselves under my care. So I borrowed a fowling-piece and joined the expedition in the role of the mighty hunter. We landed in the dark, Friday night, a compact force of eight officers and seventy or eighty blue-jackets well armed. Our guides met us at the beach. So did a shower. We had scarcely set foot on *terra firma* before the rain came to welcome us—to cheer but not inebriate; at first a gentle drizzle, then a firm crescendo, and at last a tropical deluge. We began our march by nine o'clock and tramped for hours under a kind of cloud-burst; the night black as pitch; every gully a roaring torrent; every coral fence ragged and multitudinous in scratches and tumbles; the cactus hedges disobligingly skillful in rending our garments and gashing our shins. At first our path for a long distance skirted the shore. Then as the curving line of the bay diverged from the path we struck boldly into the interior, leaving

on our right a dense grove of pines, and rising on the uplands by a deep-worn rut tangled with interlacing roots and plashing with mire. Till midnight we pushed on through the rain, and the rain through us. And by the time we straggled in at the appointed rendezvous, a deserted temple in a grove, we looked more like a set of shipwrecked pirates ourselves than a company of honest men in pursuit of those gentry. All our military ardor was soaked out of us, and a large proportion of our morals. Both were somewhat replenished by a hasty lunch. The silent old temple took charge of our haversacks and other freight; and thus relieved we separated, and the four divisions radiated out into the darkness like the sticks of a fan. Each corps vivisected itself into several scouting parties, so that in the course of the night we covered and explored a wide territory. It was a still hunt for native cabins. When one was found we silently surrounded it so that nothing could escape, and then suddenly opening the door and thrusting in a lighted torch, ransacked the hut for hidden pirates. It was not polite, and the gentle inmates were badly frightened; but we did them no harm, and had our labor for our pains.

In due time the night wore away and with

returning dawn our corps tramped back to the rendezvous. Pirate-hunting does very well for a side issue, but my business being pigeons, I took my bearings from the sacred grove and started out on a foraging tour of my own. I hunted for pigeons as faithfully as we had hunted for pirates — and with the same result. Pastures, woods, rocks, hills — I scoured them all. Not a bird. Not a ghost of a bird. Pigeons and pirates had evidently made common cause and had flown to the mountains together. The best part of the hunt was getting back to a hot breakfast at the old temple. And after all, looking at it philosophically, what right had I, a foreign interloper, to kill and eat Madjicosima pigeons, any more than they had to kill and eat me? We had a claim on the pirates, but what claim on the pigeons? So with the first squad that started, my gun and I slowly wended our way back to the ship sadder and wiser, also considerably wetter. By mid-afternoon all the divisions were safely back, and the two or three prisoners they had taken were added to the choice lot already on board. And the next morning at daybreak it was up anchor and off for Hongkong.

What became of the mutineers? Deponent saith not; but I will give you the facts and you

can judge for yourself. On our return to Hong-kong the cabin of the *Saratoga* was turned into a court-room and the prisoners were brought in one by one and confronted with the survivors of the ill-fated *Robert Browne*. The ringleaders were identified and in due time were forwarded to Canton and turned over to the Chinese courts. Perhaps they paid the penalty of their crime. Perhaps their judges, not over-fond of foreign barbarians, winked at it as on the whole a meritorious act. We never knew. But the rest of the rout we ourselves carried back to Amoy and quietly dismissed to their homes.





IV

CRUISING FOR PIRATES AND WHAT  
WE CAUGHT



## CRUISING FOR PIRATES AND WHAT WE CAUGHT

THE following September the *Saratoga* was again despatched on a mission of vengeance. A Boston merchantman, the *Celestial*, while peaceably wending her way to Hongkong, had run the gauntlet of a whole fleet of Chinese freebooters, but had managed to elude them and escape. We were sent out to catch the miscreants, or any other red-rovers we might find practicing their art, and teach them the error of their ways.

Our orders were to cruise for a month down the coast as far as the gulf of Tonquin—the first week off the Ladrões, the remaining three off the Taya islands and Hainan. It was ugly weather, squally and threatening, when we got up anchor and disappeared from Hongkong. But it took us out clear of the islands in dashing style, and three or four hours brought us to our cruising ground. There under easy sail we stood off all day and night to the southward and westward, sharply scanning every sort of craft we met and looking into the harbors for any bandits that

might be lurking there. The next forenoon we wore round and made a long stretch back toward the Ladrones; giving chase on the way to a sinister looking scow that proved to be an inoffensive trader bound to Macao, whither he fled badly frightened as soon as we let him off. One evening we met a fleet of eight junks coming in and promptly put about and overhauled them. They were as panic-stricken as the other. The sudden apparition of a big man-of-war pouncing upon them like a hawk upon a brood of chickens sent them scampering off to all points of the compass burning joss paper and wildly beating their gongs for help from the Chinese pantheon.

At last the week off the Ladrones was duly completed. The helm was put up and round we went, bound for "fresh fields and pastures new." A fair breeze was sweeping us smoothly down the seas when suddenly our foreyard determined otherwise. To the best of our knowledge and belief it had always been robust and healthy, a well behaved stick of sound and positive convictions. But all at once it was discovered that an internal disorder was preying on its vitals; whereupon the carpenter bluntly reported to the officer of the deck, and the officer of the deck to the first lieutenant, and the first lieutenant to the captain,

that the foreyard was rotten in the slings. No sailor need be reminded what that would mean in a gale of wind. Round the ship spun again on her heel, and bracing sharp up began to beat back for the nearest known port; which haven of refuge proved to be a cove in an island variously called Sancian, San chuen, St. John's. It was a quiet place occupied by fishermen, some seventy-five miles to the southwest of Macao. High bluffs, projecting ledges, with patches of sandy beach below and between, and the whole plentifully bestrewn with boulders, the relics of some far away glacial period,—that was the type of scenery. At the head of a bay some three or four miles off we could see a fishing hamlet and a fleet of small craft at anchor before it or slipping in and out with the tide. Close by us, a few rocky farms, out of which the tenants managed to scratch a living by coaxing out of the gravel small crops of bananas, oranges, pineapples, sweet potatoes and beans, wherever the jealous boulders would permit. This was the place where the Portuguese were first permitted to trade in 1517, before the founding of Macao. For a few years they had here a bustling colony. But a neighbor island, Lampaçao, proved more attractive and gradually drew away from Sancian both the trade and the



traders. Macao in turn did the same for Lampaçao, and the site was so entirely abandoned that now the very location of the ancient city is quite unknown.

The dim memory of Lampaçao and all her vanished commerce was as nothing, however, beside our interest in one man, who finished a great life and breathed his last on the shores of this obscure islet. It was in 1552 that St. Francis Xavier died on Sancian. It was in 1852, just three centuries after, that a party of us stood reverently on the strand from which the body of the heroic missionary had been borne away to be entombed in a distant church in Goa. From that day to this, though of different faith, I have felt a sense of possession in the memory and deeds of the famous East Indian apostle, simply from having walked the beach which he trod and looked on the rugged scenery which was the last vision to his closing eyes.

The delinquent spar was speedily down on deck, stripped of its harness, laid on its back and made ready for surgery. A bad case of appendicitis, or internal cancer, or worse. The carpenter and his crew went at it *con amore*, dug out the cankerous sludge, filled in with sound timber, and fished the whole with extra spars laid on and heavily clamped

along the middle of the yard. A reasonably fair job, and as strong as tools and wood could make it, but awkward and bungling; the carpenter himself declared that he would not trust it in a gale of wind. If we had had that stick aloft in the typhoon we encountered a fortnight later, very likely we should have lost our masts and gone to the bottom; in which case any possible readers who may be sauntering with me through these devious pages would have been spared the labor. But the carpenter's verdict and an official survey of the bandaged spar changed all that. The captain decided to put back to Macao and get a new foreyard. I need not hint to you how incensed the commodore was that we should dare to leave our cruising ground, nor how he set all the carpenters to work from all three ships to make the new spar out of our spare main topmast and the *Susquehanna's* spare jib-boom, and when done hustled us out of port in short order to finish our cruise. At any rate we got out of that neighborhood as fast as canvas and breeze could take us, and went to look for the other pirates. Outside a fair wind swept us down off the Taya islands. There we tried a ruse; ran the guns in, closed the ports, concealed our multitudinous crew, and did our best to look like an innocent merchant-

man, hoping to decoy some red-rover, or perhaps a whole fleet of them, to an attack. No result; pious fraud does not seem to work with pirates. So we kept on down the coast, passed the false Tinhosa, and ran in for Tinhosa the real, which proved to be a steep, rocky, mountainous island nearly half way down the eastern shore of Hainan. Another long stretch, and the delusive current swept us far to the southward and westward of Gaalong bay, and doubtless chuckled all over its foamy surface to see us laboriously beating back in the teeth of an increasing gale. If you have ever gone fishing for pirates in these outlandish parts, these unfamiliar names may assist the geographical side of your memory. We intended to run into Gaalong bay for shelter, but in the rising storm we could not fetch in, and so ran for the open main in order to get plenty of sea-room in which to meet whatever was coming.

And it was coming, sure. This Thing of the sea had been getting itself together and lying in wait for us; a demoniac octopus of the air whose tentacles were already spitefully snatching at us from afar. Let us get a look at the monster before it actually arrives, as we did not at the Madjicosima storm a few pages back.

Our unlucky cruise was just about timed with the autumnal change of monsoon. In the China seas the regular semi-annual shift of atmospheric currents occurs in September and October; when, the sun having returned into the southern hemisphere, the southwest monsoon gradually retreats from its invasion of northern zones and the northeast trades chase it back to its home. It is not a sudden change. There is a kind of tricky recess, a belt of calms and erratic weather. This is the happy hunting ground of the typhoon. As M. Reclus explains in his entertaining book, *The Ocean*, "It is at this epoch of the change of the seasons that the powerful aerial masses, charged with electricity, engage in strife for the supremacy, and by their encounter produce those great eddies which are developed in spirals across the seas and the continents." The statement which he draws from another meteorologist that of three hundred and sixty-five West Indian hurricanes recorded between 1493 and 1855, more than two-thirds came in October, when "the strongly heated coasts of South America begin to attract toward themselves the colder and denser air of the northern continent," might stand as a fair account of the situation in the East Indies also. The furnace heat of the tropics, the enormous expansion and

elevation of the lower atmospheric levels, the velocity of the other masses rushing in, their collision with island peaks and mountain ranges, their sharp concussion with each other and the attendant electric explosions,—these are the fierce dynamics of the air out of which are gendered those revolving storms that descend to the earth and go spinning their dance of death over a much enduring surface.

In point of size, they vary from the tornado which mows its narrow swath through the woods, to the full-grown cyclone whose circle sweeps half an ocean. The hurricane of 1839 was about three hundred miles in diameter at the Antilles, five hundred when it reached the Bermudas, and nearly eighteen hundred when it crashed upon Ireland. A furious cyclone encountered between Japan and Formosa in July, 1853, by the *Saratoga* and three other vessels of the Japan Expedition, which was afterwards described and mapped by Mr. Redfield, was at least a thousand miles in diameter. Still larger was the storm which overtook our flagship the *Mississippi*, not far from the same region in October of the following year. It was from fifteen hundred to two thousand miles across, and travelled for six days at a rate of from twelve to forty miles an hour. *Per contra*, the tornado

which crossed the state of Indiana in April, 1852, leaving a track littered with wreckage of forests and cattle and towns, was only a mile wide. The destructive cyclone in Iowa in 1882 averaged half a mile. One which obliterated a village near Springfield, Missouri, in April, 1880, sweeping its very site so bare that scarcely the splinters could be found, cut a path nowhere broader than one hundred and fifty rods. And finally the tornado which tore its way through Tusculumbia, Alabama, on a quiet Sabbath evening in the autumn of 1874, bursting the stoutest buildings into fragments and killing a number of the inhabitants, measured in diameter less than four hundred feet.

The height of the column is as variable as its diameter. Two miles is an unusual elevation; and the other extreme might be not more than a hundred yards. A lofty mountain range is a wall against which it beats in vain. It cannot climb. It can only pass by doubling the huge buttresses and promontories. Sometimes it is flattened down to a shallow disk on the surface of the sea, spinning like a horizontal fly-wheel, dark, angry, furious, deadly, while the sea-birds congregate out of harm's way in the calm regions a few hundred feet above, and the sun looks serenely down on



the black delirium beneath. This was the case with the typhoon just referred to as having caught in its toils so many of the ships of our squadron on their way back from Japan. Some of the officers noticed that "even when the wind was piping loudest, when the water was whirled violently by in perfect sheets, the scud moved overhead at a remarkably slow rate, and the upper layer of clouds seemed scarcely to be stirred at all." On one of those grim nights, while our rolling ship was lying to off the chain of islands that stretches from Japan to Lew Chew, not daring to run through in such a tempest and on such imperfect charts, I well remember how the moon struggled almost through the weltering haze and what a ghastly glare she cast on the boiling sea. Strange that a few hundred feet of altitude should make all the difference between a calm and a hurricane — paradise and hell.

The prognostics of these storms are well fitted to inspire alarm. Nature is not uniform. A western tornado will sometimes burst upon its victims with little or no warning. But those that come in the daytime can frequently be seen at a distance making their lurid preparations. A writer in the signal service describes it thus — very likely he has seen one coming: "The first

sign of a tornado is generally a tumultuous and strange appearance in the southwest; then the whirling funnel comes in sight writhing and swinging from side to side, now rising and again seeming to plunge down to the ground; its winds tear limbs from trees and roofs from houses, and suck them upwards with clouds of dust and *débris*. As it sweeps over a village the houses on its path are not blown over, but exploded, and their walls fall outward on all sides. Heavy wagons, beams and chains are picked up and carried through the air. Lighter objects, such as boards, shingles, clothing and papers, are often carried miles away before they fall." Another observer gives a still more circumstantial account<sup>1</sup>: "Innumerable descriptions show that the cloud in the northwest is heavy, black, and comparatively slow in its movement, until struck by a light, rather smoky, and more rapidly moving cloud from the southwest. Then the clouds rush to a common center, and there is a violent conflict of currents, driving clouds in every direction, up and down, round and round. Clouds like great sheets of white smoke dash about in a frightful manner, with such unnatural velocity that the observer is often panic-stricken and flees to the nearest cellar for safety.

<sup>1</sup>*Popular Science Monthly*, xxviii, p. 313.

Finally a black threatening mass descends slowly toward the earth, whirling violently, but still manifesting confusion in form. This soon gives place to the peculiar funnel-like shape, with definite outline so well known. It appears intensely black, like coal smoke issuing from a locomotive, and its trunk-like form sometimes has a wrenching spiral motion, like a snake hung up by the head and writhing in agony. As white clouds approach and are drawn into the vortex, the funnel-shaped trunk sways like an elastic column. It sometimes rises, falls, and careens from side to side like a balloon. Branches and trunks of trees, rails, tree-tops, roofs, pieces of houses, straw, furniture, stoves, iron-work, lumber, and other *débris* are seen flying about in the central part of the cloud, but are gradually drawn upward and thrown out near the top, usually not until the storm has progressed a mile or two farther on from a given point. Dark masses of cloud are seen to shoot downward on either side of the funnel, to enter it just above the ground, and to apparently rush upward through the center and out at the top in a terrific manner. Sometimes the funnel pauses and whirls with apparently increased velocity, reducing everything to splinters, and leaving scarcely a vestige of a house

or clump of trees, all being ground comparatively fine and carried away as chaff. . . . . The people at Westwood describe the roar of the tornado as having a peculiar hollow, humming sound. It somewhat resembles the rumbling of cars, or the booming of the sea. The sound is indescribable and unlike any other in nature. It is so loud that the falling of heavy trees against the side of a house and the crash of falling buildings are lost in the general roar." The more formidable cyclones that ravage the deep usually send their dread heralds in advance. M. Reclus in describing their approach indulges in some vivid rhetoric. "Some days before the terrible hurricane is unchained, nature, already gloomy, and as if veiled, seems to anticipate a disaster. The little white clouds which float in the heights of air with the counter trade-winds are hidden under a yellowish or dirty white vapor; the heavenly bodies are surrounded by vaguely iridescent halos and heavy layers of clouds, which in the evening present the most magnificent shadows of purple and gold stretching far over the horizon, and the air is as stifling as if it came from the mouth of some great furnace. The cyclone, which already whirls in the upper regions, gradually approaches the surface of the ground or water. Torn fragments of red-

dish or black clouds are carried furiously along by the storm, which plunges and hurries through space; the column of mercury is wildly agitated in the barometer and sinks rapidly; the birds assemble as if to take counsel, then fly swiftly away so as to escape the tempest that pursues them. Soon a dark mass shows itself in the threatening part of the sky; this mass increases and spreads itself out, gradually covering the azure with a veil of a terrible darkness or a blood-colored hue. This is the cyclone, which fills and takes possession of its empire, twisting its immense spirals around the horizon. The roaring of the seas and skies succeeds to this awful silence."

These hurricanes have a will of their own, and revolve in opposite directions on opposite sides of the equator. In the southern hemisphere they wheel from left to right, like the hands of a watch; in the northern, from right to left. This is not their only motion. Occasionally one will spin on the same spot, like a top; but most of them, like the planets, not only revolve on their axis but at the same time travel in an orbit, sometimes with great velocity. The rate attained by the entire body of the storm varies from one mile per hour to forty, fifty, even sixty. The distances traversed vary still more. A few hundred rods may exhaust



the tornado. A few hundred miles would make a fair average for the cyclone. Probably the most extensive track that has ever been traced and mapped was that of the great storm of 1885 which circumnavigated more than half the globe. It was generated near the southern coast of China in the latter part of September, "passed over Japan and the Aleutian archipelago, and entered the United States October tenth. Crossing the Rocky mountain range it proceeded through the northern states and Canada to Labrador and Davis strait. In the Atlantic it was joined on the eighteenth by another disturbance which had come up from the Atlantic tropics, the junction of the two being followed by a cessation of progressive movement from the nineteenth to the twenty-fifth. During this period a severe gale which passed along the southern counties of England on the morning of the twenty-fourth — a storm the forecasting of which was shown to be impossible — was formed. Following in the wake of this storm the parent cyclone reached the French coast on the twenty-seventh, its advent being marked by violent gales and extensive floods over the whole of western and central Europe and Algeria. Passing through France and the Netherlands, the disturbance showed signs of exhaustion, and on



November first, in the Baltic, it quietly dispersed, after accomplishing a journey of more than sixteen thousand miles in thirty-six days."<sup>1</sup>

The speed with which these portents travel along the surface is slow compared with their frightful gyrations on their own axis; a velocity which hurls weighty masses out of their path with the force of dynamite. In the hurricane of August, 1837, at St. Thomas, an eye-witness writes, "The fort at the entrance of the harbor is leveled with the foundation and the twenty-four pounders thrown down; it looks as if it had been battered to pieces by cannon shot. . . . One fine American ship, five hundred tons, was driven on shore near the citadel, and in an hour nothing could be seen of her but a few timbers." In the Iowa cyclone of 1882 trees, cattle, human beings, even houses, were sucked up into the enormous spirals, whisked through the air, and then dashed to atoms. This was the storm that was so fatal to the institution at Grinnell. Usually colleges investigate phenomena; this phenomenon investigated a college, and did it with a scientific thoroughness that left nothing further to be analyzed.

I have spoken of an "axis." An axis of course there is; but around it lies a central space of

<sup>1</sup>*Pop. Science Monthly*, April, 1886, p. 857.

calms, which may be rods or even miles in diameter. The typhoon center is greatly dreaded by the navigator. A ship caught within the deadly enclosure wallows unmanageably in a tumbling sea and inside a cylinder of wind whose walls are whirling with a frightful speed. Violent squalls and waterspouts are sent tearing off from the revolving walls, and go thundering to and fro within the cylinder like a Bedlam of demons. In one of our many visits to Hongkong an English man-of-war came into port which had undergone a novel experience. In crossing the Indian ocean she found a typhoon was making the same trip just north of her and about parallel with her own course. Her plucky commander was of an inquiring turn of mind and thought his ugly neighbor would bear investigation. He accordingly battened down his hatches and sailed in and out of the storm three times for the purpose of determining its size and course and verifying the direction and force of the wind. Then he hove to and waited, and when at a safe distance sailed across its wake. There he found a big ship over which the center had passed, waterlogged, dismasted, and terribly mangled in the mighty struggle. He had the happiness of picking off her crew before she went down.

Of all the apparatus of havoc which belongs to the hurricane there is one more to be noted which is peculiarly fatal. It is the storm wave. The hurricane not only draws into its vortex the winds and lightnings and clouds; it sucks in the sea also, and lifts a disk of water above the general level of the ocean almost as broad as its own diameter. This enormous tidal wave does not revolve with the wind, but is drawn forward by it and keeps pace with it. Like a murderous slave it does the bidding of the typhoon, and is ready to engulf fleets, submerge islands, demolish towns, desolate anything that may lie in its track. Read the list of hurricanes that have ravaged the West Indies and our own southern coast, from the first one noted by Columbus down to this present year of grace. In how many cases the storm has carried with it appalling inundations that have buried villages and strewn the wrecks of vessels far inland. In October, 1864, this tempest-wave raised the Hoogly twenty-two feet for many miles above Calcutta, sweeping banks and islands with a fatal flood. A cyclone which struck the southern coast of India in 1789 led in its train three storm-waves which buried a city of thirty thousand inhabitants and lifted a whole fleet of vessels far up on the shore. In a similar

catastrophe in 1876, which broke without warning in the night, three large islands and many smaller ones off the mouth of the Ganges were buried by a wave twenty feet deep, and more than two hundred and fifty thousand hapless beings were swept into the sea. During a typhoon which passed over Kobe, Japan, in July, 1871, scores of ships and junks were carried into the fields and forests far beyond the reach of the highest tides. In one of the violent hurricanes of the West Indies the waves broke on the northern shores of the Barbadoes seventy-two feet above the mean level. The memorable storm of October, 1780, has been known as the most terrible cyclone of modern times. The ravages of its tidal wave were almost as destructive as those of the tempest itself. This frightful convulsion hurled its weight upon the hapless islands and fleets in its way more like an avalanche of the ocean than a mere tempest. It spared nothing. Squadrons were crushed like eggshells and sent to the bottom with all on board. An English fleet at anchor off St. Lucia went down on the spot. A French convoy with five thousand troops on board, several men-of-war on their way home, and a large number of merchantmen trading among the islands, were overtaken and sunk with their crews. Cities and

plantations were ravaged as terribly as the deep. On the various islands nearly twenty thousand people were crushed under the wreck of their homes, or mangled by the countless missiles flying through the air, or swept off by the tidal wave. A less extensive hurricane, but almost equally destructive, fell upon the southern coast of China in the autumn of 1874. Hongkong was almost torn to pieces. Every vessel in the harbor or on the coast was crippled or sunk, and some eight thousand lives were lost. An officer of the Pacific mail steamer *Alaska* saw a fleet of more than one hundred Chinese junks founder all at once. The *Alaska* herself was driven on shore. Macao, seventy miles west, fared still worse. The storm obliterated whole streets and piled them with blocking ruins. To add to its horrors a band of pirates fired the city for purposes of plunder and seven hundred houses were consumed. Every vessel, foreign or native, was destroyed. Ten thousand lives were lost; and long before the dead could be disentangled for burial the air became loaded with pestilence, and a wholesale cremation was ordered. The destruction of property reached a total of millions.

I trust the reader is in a forgiving mood, and our long delay in reaching this particular typhoon



will be condoned. There is a melancholy fascination about these tragedies of the sea; and I have gathered a few of the grim facts which show the power and the ferocity of this "sleeping giant of the Ind" when he wakes in his wrath.

The ninth of October was creeping on. For some days the weather had been ugly and threatening. Somewhere a storm was mustering for the fray, and

"Brooding its dreamy thunders far aloof."

The barometer fluttered for a day or two and then began to sink. The sky looked wicked. The wind was blowing hard and increasing. Sail had been gradually reduced. The waves had worked themselves into an uncomfortable ferment. "Rocked in the cradle of the deep" is very romantic when you sing it, but not so nice when the cradle breaks your head and threatens to pitch you out. The timbers moaned and creaked, and the spars aloft groaned with the extra pressure when some deeper lurch swept them roaring back against the blast. I do not know a sound more dismal or ominous than the sepulchral tones wrung from the very fibre of the ship as she staggers reluctantly onward to meet the coming storm, perhaps to meet her doom. She seems to be groaning her own requiem beforehand.



When a tempest is on hand, sailors like to make all snug aloft and aloft. Seamanship requires it. So does safety. The sailor is not the reckless being you think him when you see him at work astride a yard-arm, or standing on a rope reefing topsails seventy-five feet in the air. He is a prehensile animal, and has methods of clinging which are not recognized in common philosophy. By noon we were in a state of uncomfortable preparation; royal and topgallant yards and masts sent down and stowed on deck; spare spars and boats made fast with extra lanyards; guns secured with double lashings; hatches battened down, and life-lines stretched along the decks. A man-of-war is built for offensive warfare; but in an encounter with a tempest she is wholly on the defensive. She cannot attack the storm, it is the storm that attacks her. She cannot even strike back. There is no brilliant manœuvre with which she can flank her omnipresent antagonist. Her petty array of battery, pikes, carbines and cutlasses, with which she plays battle with other toy ships like herself, are worse than useless in the presence of a foe that scours around the horizon, skirmishes at her from invisible distances, blinds her with Egyptian darkness, crazes her with a savage drunken sea, and gathering its forces into

successive paroxysms of wrath swoops down upon her with the weight and plunge of half the heavens falling. Then her battery is her deadliest burden, and her sharpest weapons make her only a more bristling target for the lightnings. She cannot screen herself. She cannot ward off the pitiless blows. She can only lie there on the devilish sea and take unresisting all the fury and ferocity with which her grim adversary can belabor her. The Thing that was coming was evidently a cyclone; in the vernacular of the east, a typhoon. Either term is sufficiently hideous to any one whose judgment of the sign is at all guided by his experience of the thing signified.

With the data at hand it would not be easy to determine where this particular hurricane originated, or in the throes of what atmospheric convulsion it may have been brought to the agony of birth. There was a villainous gale the same day at Madras, with a fearful score of wrecks and lives; but that was two thousand miles to the west of us, and our assailant came from the south-east. The October mail steamer was badly damaged by a typhoon a few days before us in nearly the same spot, but that had vanished and ours could not have been its residuum. The *Sobrao*, a Portuguese ship, was caught in a typhoon off

the Bashees which lasted ten days, and finally, mangled, dismasted, and utterly exhausted, she held together long enough for an American barque to pick off her crew, then sullenly gave up the fight and went down. This was two days before our hurricane and seven or eight hundred miles to the east. It is possible that the vortex in which we were entrapped may have been an eddy sent tearing off from this larger sphere. If so, its path must have been a curve cutting diagonally across Luzon or down its western shores before it struck off over the seas in quest of other prey. The weather record of Manila for the autumn of 1852, if our Filipino friends kept such records then, would easily determine. We never knew what other havoc it may have inflicted, with the single exception of one comrade in distress, an English ship that started for California and had the ill luck to be interviewed by three cyclones in succession. The last of the three was ours, and it well nigh finished her. It was "too much typhoon," as our Celestial friends admitted; and in process of time she came limping back into Hongkong, halt, crippled, masts gone, bulwarks and everything else swept clean with the deck from fore-castle to cabin. Logically she ought to have gone to the bottom; but her three tormentors were

considerate enough not to come all at once. It was an unusually bad season. Many were the giant storms that stalked over the waves and many the craft that attempted to run the gauntlet. Some succeeded and escaped into more amiable seas; some were baffled and put back for help; and some left their mangled ribs to garnish the reefs, or vanished in the still depths where the storms send their victims and plunder but can never go themselves.

We had been all day standing out to the northward and eastward on the port tack, with the wind from the northward and westward. The farther we got the more violent was the gale and the heavier the sea. No wonder, for we were plunging straight into the storm. The path of the cyclone was just to the north of us. It was crossing the China sea on a west-nor'west course. We entered its southwest quarter, and were therefore heading straight for its centre nearly all the afternoon. Any East Indian navigator who may chance to read this account would say that we were on the wrong tack. Yes, we were; but to a ship on a lee shore Hobson's choice may be the only one open. Our position at noon that day was lat.  $17^{\circ} 41'$ , long.  $110^{\circ} 34'$ , southeast of Gaalong Bay. It had been the captain's inten-

tion to run in, but the wind was contrary, in every sense of the term, and the coveted shelter of Gaalong was impossible. Our special danger was from the Paracels—an immense tract of reefs and shoals something like a hundred square miles, without an island or rock above the level of the sea on which a poor waif might find refuge in case he outlived the boiling surge and the tearing coral. We were just to windward of this sunken trap. With the Paracels on one side and a typhoon on the other it was worse than being caught “between the devil and the deep sea.” It was not inspiring to reflect that if we did not founder before reaching it we might go smashing upon it at any moment. In the desperate effort to claw off the ship was staggering under a press of canvas which otherwise she would not have dared to carry. The farther out we got, the more furious and brutal the sea. A stunning blow from the crest of a wave dashed in the starboard head. The decks had long been flooded. At every lurch mountains of brine tumbled on board. Sail had been gradually reduced to foresail and main topsail, both close-reefed, with main trysail and fore storm-staysail. But the violence of the wind, instead of driving her forward, pressed her over almost on her beam ends, and she was drift-



ing bodily to leeward. But that way lay the Paracels. That would not do. The canvas must come off. Meanwhile all hands on deck; all the officers were summoned to the cabin. The first lieutenant had taken the deck. His stentorian voice could roar like a bull of Bashan; but in the fury of the storm even his voice could not be heard six inches from his lips. The orders were given in the cabin and were carried forward among the men by the other officers who picked their way desperately along the life-lines. It is a serious job to shorten sail in a hurricane; commonly the hurricane does not wait for you but does it itself. The first rope started might take the masts out of her. But there was no alternative. And after a hard fight of two hours with the whole crew at the ropes, the poor *Saratoga* was lying under bare poles, wallowing, pitching, rolling, plunging, almost sinking in the pitiless sea; the foresail clewed up and stowed after a fashion, the storm-staysail blown out of the bolt-ropes, the trysail ripped into shreds and wound in all impossible ways about the main shrouds and running rigging. The main topsail gave the poor fellows the toughest work and the greatest danger. By superhuman effort it was clewed up, and the boatswain, a powerfully muscular man, led



the crew of maintopmen up to furl it. He managed to crawl into the slings of the yard, but not a man would follow him. Brave as they were, the scene was enough to defy human power. The yard, though of course down on the cap, was still seventy-five feet and more from the deck. The great sail was flapping and writhing and tugging like a Titan, and threatened to rip yard and all into the sea. The mast whirled in giddy circles, sometimes dipping the yard-arms in the foam; and with such sudden and furious jerks that it required all one's strength to hold on and keep from being flung overboard. The air was full of driving scud and black as pitch. The wind scooped off the tops of the waves and sent them hissing through the rigging with the force of a chain shot. And the ghastly phosphorescence of the sea as it boiled around the ship and through the broken ports and over the hammock nettings cast a deathly glare over the scene that served to make the darkness visible. The men crept down and abandoned the sail to its fate. It had four reefs in it, and these held; but all below them was stripped into ragged ribbons. Next morning the poor topsail, which was nearly new, was a curiosity fit for a museum.

All this time we were heading to the northward and eastward on the port tack. It was certain that the Paracels were right under our lee; how near, we could only conjecture. And though we were forging slowly ahead, yet we were drifting very much faster toward those fatal rocks. It was decided to get the ship about if possible, set some patch of canvas that might perhaps hold, and run her out into wider sea-room. Then we could resume the port tack whenever the shift of wind should indicate that the storm had traveled far enough to bring us out of its southwestern quarter into the southeastern. Any shipmaster will understand how a vessel caught in a typhoon to windward of the Paracels and entering it from the south would find the port tack the wrong one to get into the storm and the right one to get out of it. With infinite difficulty and risk the ship was got round on the starboard tack, and headed about southwest. She met her new course with a frightful lurch and then a bound and plunge as if determined to do her best. But it was asking too much. She made no headway, and those dread rocks like a magnet were dragging her to leeward as fast as before. Three or four hours must settle our fate. We watched the barometer. Will it never stop falling? Does it mean that we are

nearing the centre? Shall we go down in that horrible vortex? Or will the storm keep us up till it can dash us on those ghastly reefs? If the cyclone is of great diameter, or is passing slowly, the wind must hold from the same quarter for a long time and there will be no escaping the shoals. Better be on the port tack. That might give us a ghost of a chance. Preparations were made accordingly for wearing ship. But by this time she had become quite unmanageable. In that weltering mob of a sea, with enormous pyramids of black water rushing at her from all directions at once, half submerging her and then in the next breath pitching her out on the tip of a roaring billow, she would not mind her helm, nor pay the least attention to any of the common arts of seamanship. As a last resort a desperate experiment was tried which I had read of but had never expected to witness. The ship was under bare poles and not a rag of canvas could live on her for a moment. With an immense deal of persuasion, some of it more force than suasion, a hundred or more of the men were driven into the weather fore rigging from twenty to fifty feet above the deck, where they formed a dense mass against which the hurricane drove with tremendous pressure. This was the evolution attempted

by one of the men-of-war caught in the disastrous hurricane at Samoa in 1889; in this case the men being massed in the mizzen shrouds instead of the fore. I have often thought of those men thus hung in mid air, and congratulated myself that it was not one of the duties of a captain's clerk to be among them. Drenched with the salt spray, benumbed, yet clinging like death to the slippery shrouds, whirled and jerked through the air by the writhing ship beneath, swept over the boiling caldron of waters now on the one side and the next instant on the other, it was a miracle that they were not every man of them snapped off and shot headlong into the sea; and all the while the black night made lurid and infernal by the phosphorescent foam, and the elements roaring together with a din more deafening and horrible than forty million parks of artillery and as many more locomotives, all thundering, howling, booming and screeching at once. While these poor fellows were hanging on for dear life in the fore shrouds, other men were stationed with axes to cut away the mizzenmast. The helm was put hard up. But the poor ship, lacerated and exhausted, seemed unable to make any further effort and lay helplessly wallowing and tumbling like a log. A desperate half hour had passed since the men

crept into the rigging. It seemed a week. The order was on the lips of the first lieutenant to cut away, when at last as if awaking to the situation and rousing from some dreadful swoon she showed signs of returning life. She began to feel her helm and the terrific pressure of the wind on that black swarm in the fore rigging, and slowly and painfully began to pay off. It was a perilous moment as she swung round into the trough of the sea. Will she live through it? More likely she will roll herself under and go down. We braced ourselves and held our breath. Both batteries went under, as indeed they had been doing all the evening. But there was good stuff in her yet. As she came to her course, with a few tremendous lurches she shook herself clear of the mountains of water on her decks and rose heavily and wearily on the next wave. Once fairly round on the port tack it was found that the change had come which the far seeing barometer had already predicted. The wind was hauling to the westward. This meant that the centre of the storm was directly north of us and was rapidly passing. It meant also that we were not to leave our bones on the Paracels. As it proved, the evolution had been performed under the fiercest blast we had that night. It was nine o'clock when we wore

ship. The storm continued to rage with fury, but the squalls came less frequently and were less spiteful. By midnight it had so far spent itself that it was safe to begin to make sail. With the close-reefed foresail on her again she was steadier, and, crippled as she was, did her best to crawl out of the dread neighborhood in which she had so nearly met her doom. What that doom would have been you can imagine from the memory of scores of proud ships that have sailed out on the mysterious sea, from which no tidings have ever come back to the wives and mothers that watched and wept and prayed. Or if the grim Paracels had been our sepulchre, death would have been still more tragic. There are no islands in that submerged continent of graves; no friendly strand on which a drowning waif might possibly be cast; nothing but murderous ledges and wild tearing coral reefs. Had the *Saratoga* struck there, five minutes would have sufficed to rend ship and crew into shreds and scatter them through miles of angry surf.

The next morning was a peaceful Sabbath. When I went on deck at six bells the sun was shining. The sea had quieted down, and a languid breeze was wafting us gently along; sky and ocean demurely innocent — apparently no recol-



lection of the wild orgies of the night before. The morning watch was sending down the fragments of split sails and bending others in their stead. The decks were still lumbered with *débris* and everything drenched and soaked. You may remember how Bessus, the poltroon in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, described his memorable drubbing: "I think I have been cudgelled by all nations, and almost all religions." If our poor old belabored craft could have put herself into rhetoric, that is doubtless the way in which she would have expressed her feelings. Three boats were missing, torn away davits and all. The spare spars in the main chains were gone, ports smashed in, and loads of the smaller deck furniture, battle axes, cutlasses, handspikes, life buoys, halyard racks, and the like, washed overboard. During the night the spanker boom had got adrift and taken command of the poop, sweeping it clean of everything; and cutting up the heavy iron rail on both sides had twirled it into the mizzen rigging like so much wire. There was no loss of life. Many of the crew were half drowned in the scuppers, or cut and bruised as they were swept to and fro across the decks in avalanches of waves, ropes, spars, men, and everything movable, in a jumble together. But the thing was passed, and we had

come out alive. It was an immense satisfaction to find that we were still on top of the ocean instead of the ocean on top of us. A week sufficed to repair damages and make things shipshape. And we started up the seas again to renew our quest of pirates and glory.

Neither glory nor pirates were to be had for the asking. But we had the luck to encounter one episode that is pleasant to remember. One forenoon, a fortnight after our mauling by the tempest, the lookout at the masthead sung out, "Sail ho!" It was but a speck on the distant waves, perhaps a derelict, or a tangle of jetsam from some foundering bark. But as we approached we could see something moving on board. It proved to be a Chinese fishing boat, dismasted in a typhoon three days after ours. The wretched survivors were waving frantic signals of distress. We sent a boat and took them off. For nearly a fortnight they had been drifting about on the waves, provisions gone, and nothing left but to surrender to starvation or the merciless sea. They were helped on board, six gaunt skeletons; and the first thing they did was to drop on their knees and knock their foreheads on the deck, worshiping officers and crew alike for rescuing them from death. I never saw a more pathetic sight. The

next thing was to turn them over to the medical department for such mild nutrition as would save them from starving. Then we went to quarters, cast loose the guns, and began blazing away at the dismasted junk in order to sink her out of the way of passing ships. But somehow the balls were contrary; the sea was rough, and she got only four shots out of a whole broadside. As she did not seem disposed to be good and go to the bottom, another boat was sent to set her on fire. We filled away and left her blazing astern.

Another week and our time was up. We plodded our way back to the old berth, and without pirates, without glory, but with a lot of experience, came to anchor as usual in Macao roads.

V

THE SCOURGE OF THE EASTERN SEAS



## THE SCOURGE OF THE EASTERN SEAS

IF we did not catch any pirates in that dismal cruise, we can pursue them through another chapter and perhaps may overtake some of them yet. It is much easier to catch them on paper than on the high seas.<sup>1</sup>

If any part of the world might seem to have been originally designed for a pirates' paradise, the southern coast of China is the place. Fringed with capes, beaded with islands of every size and shape, pierced by estuaries made up of numberless winding channels, it opens to the sea-rover countless coves and pockets and watery labyrinths, for lying in ambush or hiding from pursuit. One of the wide-spread groups of islands through whose tortuous passages the Canton river finds its way to the sea has been the scene of so many of these tragedies that it has richly earned its sinister title

<sup>1</sup> The chief authorities for the facts given in this chapter are various volumes of the *Chinese Repository* and of the *Asiatic Journal*; S. Wells Williams, *The Middle Kingdom*; Du Halde, *General History of China*; Guillemard, *Australasia*; Wallace, *Australasia*; Fortune, *Residence Among the Chinese*; Downing, *Fanqui in China*; Forbes, *Five years in China*; St. John, *The wild coasts of Nipon*; Yung-lun-yuen, *History of the Pirates who infested the China Sea from 1807 to 1810*, translated by Charles Friederich Newman; and my own manuscript diary of four years on the East India station. Many writers on Oriental topics have been consulted, and various books of travel.



of the Ladrones, (Robbers.) Ever since primeval commerce began to creep along the shores of the great empire, it has doubtless had its bloody parasites. The lonely trader and the clumsy fleet as well have had to reckon with this ever present menace as one of the risks of the voyage. It was never certain from behind what headland or out of what lagoon might issue at any moment a pack of these ocean wolves. If departing voyagers never returned, it was sometimes the typhoons and sometimes the pirates. Dead men tell no tales.

It is easy to cover with facile phrase the long and painful evolution of the centuries, especially the slow-moving cycles of Cathay. It is not so easy to fill in the picture with the actual details; to imagine the growing commerce and the growing piracy that preyed upon it; to portray the long ages of sorrow on the sea — the stealthy surprise, the sharp attack, the vain attempt to flee, the desperate stand at bay, the fight for life, the brutish yells, the cry for mercy, the ghastly silence that settles on the slippery decks as the butchers leisurely proceed to rifle their prey. What myriads of tragedies like this have been enacted far back in the dim primeval, while the Celestial Empire has been slowly emerging from

savagery into national life, no chronicler has told. But at least it was a process of martial training. As Chinese commerce has run the gauntlet and fought its way into existence, it has developed in its own mariners, and in their assailants as well, those qualities of courage, hardihood and grit which the Western world could but admire in the brave fellows of the Yalu fight in 1894. The handling of the *Ting Yuen* and the *Chen Yuen*, especially in the latter part of the action, affords ample proof of the pluck of the Chinese man-o'-war's-man when his blood is up. The victory fell to Japan; but history will award to the Admiral Ting Ju Chang and his men the credit due to their daring and skill. They fought for their country against what they believed to be unjust usurpation; and as one reads of their deeds of valor it is easy to imagine that in the veins of some of those warriors ran the blood of generations of old-time buccaneers. The annals of Chinese piracy have not wholly faded into oblivion. Some epochs in its history are familiar to those students who have a fancy for mousing about in the unbeaten tracks of Oriental life. A glimpse at the *modus operandi* will help to an intelligent appreciation of these gruesome records. A few modern samples will suffice.

The year before our futile quest for these gentlemen of the high seas as narrated in the last chapter, Captain Massie of H. B. M. steamship *Cleopatra* had sent out a boat expedition among the islands which after a running fight of five hours had captured three eighteen-gun lorchas; and yet two months afterward on about the same cruising ground the *Brillante* was cut off by free-booters, plundered of a large amount of treasure, the crew massacred, and the ship scuttled and sunk. In March 1853 her majesty's steam-sloop *Hermes* came upon the scent of a whole squadron a little way up the coast. After a hot pursuit the outlaws turned at bay and defended themselves with savage ferocity. But they were no match for British guns and steam. The *Hermes* avenged some of their villanies by sending four junks to the bottom and towing three more as prizes back to Hongkong.

In the summer of 1835 there came limping into Hongkong harbor a much-abused hulk, whose misadventures inspired sympathy wherever her pitiful story came to be known. It was the English barque *Troughton* from Singapore. First of all she encountered a typhoon which did not leave her till her masts were wrenched out of her and her bulwarks were torn off clean with the

decks. Her exhausted crew managed to keep her afloat with the pumps, and rigging a sail on a jury-mast were slowly wafted in toward the land. Here a new enemy awaited them. Surrounded by trading junks and fishing craft, whose crews would often come on board and lend a hand at the pumps, their crippled condition was speedily recognized. At sundown one afternoon two piratical luggers laid her alongside and poured a swarm of Celestial cutthroats on board. The captain and mate dashed into the cabin for their fire-arms; but before a shot could be fired two hundred pirates had overpowered the crew and lashed them to the deck. The captain and mate fought from the cabin as long as their ammunition lasted, and then did their best to blow up the ship. Exhausted from loss of blood they were at last driven from their refuge and bound with the rest of the crew. The pirates looted their prize of everything which the typhoon had spared and then vanished in the darkness.

Sometimes these amiable enterprises are conducted by amateurs, so to speak, by your own crew for example, if you happen to have shipped a gang of Chinamen. Things have changed somewhat even in the Central Flowery Kingdom, but time was when a little professional venture of this

sort was not uncongenial to the average Chinese coolie, whether ashore or afloat. In 1828 a French merchantman, the *Navigateur*, was wrecked on the coast of Cochin China. The commander hired a junk to carry the remnants of his crew and cargo northward to Macao. As they neared their destination the natives, who were five times their number, rose upon them, murdered them all but one and made off with their booty. That one after fighting desperately for his life leaped overboard and was picked up in the night by a passing fisherman. It helps one to bear the memory of the outrage more calmly to know that by his evidence in court some fifteen or twenty of the miscreants were identified and got short shrift for their crime.

There have been bloody epochs in the history of Chinese commerce when piracy was as much an organized system as the opium traffic is now. Whole fleets of sea-robbers prowled about the coasts, plundered villages, levied blackmail on native and foreigner alike, and generally silenced their victims by sending them to the bottom. Let us not be unreasonable. Those were days of the iron hand everywhere. Why not give the Mongol his chance as well as the Roman, the Norseman, the Corsican, the Turk? Why not allow Koshinga



to play his drama along with Morgan, Hastings, Kidd, Lafitte, Duval, and all the other great actors of tragedy?

Chinese annals record two periods during which these marauding fleets became so powerful and insolent that the empire with all its resources could not destroy them nor even repel their attacks. There is plenty of romance in the story. The most famous corsairs known to Chinese history, most famous perhaps because most ferocious, were a father and son, Ching Chelung and Ching Chingkung. They flourished about the time of the Manchu conquest in 1644. The son was familiarly called Kwoshing, but is better known by his Portuguese Latinized name Koshinga. The father, after years of adventure, honest and dishonest, untold and untellable, found himself at the head of an immense nondescript fleet, with which he harried the helpless coasts and laid waste the seas. Bribes of wealth and rank decoyed the redoubtable chieftain into the imperial service. He was made supreme commander of the Chinese navy. In his new position it became his duty to protect commerce and destroy piracy. He accordingly protected commerce and destroyed piracy. He knew how. No petty scruples of honor or generous memory stood in the way. It was as a



sort of grim atonement for his own crimes that whole squadrons of his former comrades were with unpitying impartiality despatched to the infernal shades. He assumed the monopoly of all lucrative commerce and levied tribute on all manner of craft. He did what he liked, and no power in the empire dared question his right. The emperor even bestowed on his son in marriage a princess of the blood. In course of time his unchallenged supremacy made him careless. Detected in an intrigue against the government he was enticed to court and there found himself in a gilded cage beyond whose bars he was never again permitted to go. There he languished for years and finally died a prisoner of state.

It would take lurid colors to paint the wrath of Koshinga when it became apparent that the old tiger, his sire, was held in hopeless captivity. No doubt the atmosphere reeked with Chinese rhetoric. Vowing eternal hate to the whole Tatar race, he summoned his fellow ruffians and betook himself to his home on the wave. This was in 1646. For more than thirty years his name was the terror of the seas. He preyed upon commerce until from sheer fright commerce shut itself up in port and dared not come out. As a result the few prizes he caught were not enough to maintain

and feed his vast squadron. Then he invaded the shores and plundered not only villages and towns but capital cities and provinces. He besieged Nanking. He captured and fortified Amoy. He finally stole and occupied the island of Formosa, seized the government, established arsenals and ports for his fleets, and thence hurled his filibustering raids upon the opposite coasts. At last his bloody incursions became such an intolerable scourge to the empire, which could neither prevent nor resist them, that the extraordinary measure was adopted of abandoning for the time all trade on the seas and withdrawing the entire population from the coast. This was actually done, probably the only instance of the kind in history, and the queer Chinese were the only people who would ever have dreamed of tactics so absurd and so masterly. For hundreds of leagues up and down the shores of the great realm there stretched between the hungry vampires and their victims a strip of abandoned seacoast twelve miles broad, whose fields lay untilled, whose once populous cities and villages lay deserted and crumbling in decay, whose useless junks slumbered and foundered at their moorings in the harbors. Byron's "dream which was not all a dream" sounds

almost like the work of a newspaper reporter writing up the details:

“The rivers, lakes and ocean all stood still,  
And nothing stirred within their silent depths;  
Ships sailorless, lay rotting on the sea.”

Macao alone was excepted, and that because the Portuguese colonists were presumed to be competent to protect themselves. It was seven years before the deserted sea-fringe of the empire was re-occupied and trade was allowed to flow back into its wonted channels. The death of the dreaded Koshinga soon after closed the piratical era of the seventeenth century.

Minor adventurers still carried on their more stealthy depredations, and have done so intermittently ever since. The growing value of an increasing commerce, with the addition of priceless argosies from Europe and America, furnished ample temptation. China has always grown her full quota of bandits and thugs, ever ready to take advantage of such golden opportunities. But no other outbreak of piracy on so grand a scale has since occurred, until the first decade of the nineteenth century.

In December 1806 the mate of an English ship was captured and brought into the presence of the commandant of the fleet. He found himself in

a squadron of some six hundred junks and lorchas, carrying batteries of from six to eighteen pounders, and classed in five divisions under five independent chiefs. During his captivity he became familiar with the entire system, its organization, its stringent regulations, the numbers and armament of the divisions, their plans and methods of attack. After some five months of captivity he was finally ransomed. Three years later another Englishman fell into their hands. The fleet had grown. There were six divisions. The total force operating, though rarely all together, he estimated at eight hundred large vessels and a thousand smaller craft, carrying an equipment of some seventy thousand men. The atrocities he witnessed are detailed with a sailor's frankness and do not make pleasant reading. It was Koshinga *redivivus*, only worse. The Englishman's story fully corroborates the chronicle written down by Yung-lun-yuen, a Chinese scholar who was a contemporary of the bloody actors and exploits he describes. The six squadrons sailed under six flags — red, yellow, black, blue, green, and white. It was the yellow fleet which has furnished this chapter with its label, for it was the admiral of the yellow, Woo-che-ting, who assumed the winsome title "Scourge of the East-

ern Seas." If actions speak louder than words he more than made his title good. The red fleet is of still more thrilling interest, partly because it outnumbered all the rest put together, partly because it was for a time commanded by a woman. In 1807 the arch-outlaw Ching-yih, who had driven it into the smoke and flame of many a desperate conflict, perished in a violent storm. His widow at once took command, and in a hundred fights demonstrated that she had inherited the temper and prowess of her bloody mate. The "new woman" of the East had come. Men feared and obeyed. She maintained the discipline of a martinet and exacted implicit submission. Never was petticoat government more strenuous or more efficient. She was punctilious in her dealings with the folk on shore, and by honest and liberal payment for supplies won their confidence and favor; a policy which the other divisions of the fleet might have followed with advantage.

Some of the exploits of these red-rovers are curiously interesting. If any of my readers have sailed up the Canton river, you will recall the Chinese fortress of the Boca Tigris at its mouth, on the starboard side as you enter. Down by the waterside a long white parapet stretches along the shore; at each end a wall reaches up the hill and

disappears over the crest. Whether there is a fourth wall out of sight, joining the two and completing the square, I do not remember; but certain British tars could tell you, if they have lasted from 1841 to this present year of grace. During the opium war the fortress was attacked. The storming party pulled quietly around the headland and forming on the beach clambered up over the hill, and the first notice the Celestials had that they were being attacked was the sight of the foreign troops rushing down upon them from the rear within the walls. There was nothing for it but to surrender. They surrendered therefore, but bristling with wrath at such a breach of military manners. "Hiyah! Why you no come front side! More better makee fight where we makee ready!"

It was an earlier commandant of this same fortress who met with equally bad luck. One of the fleets appeared in his neighborhood and he sallied out to attack it. The pirates surrounded him, and after a furious action which lasted all day and with such havoc as may better be left to the imagination, captured him and such fragments of his fleet as were still afloat. This disaster was partly avenged the next year, when the Chinese admiral with a hundred junks attacked



another fleet on the same cruising ground. Great numbers of the pirates were destroyed and some two hundred taken prisoners. If you are familiar with Chinese methods you can readily judge how long the two hundred were kept from joining their bloody shipmates in the shades below. In another encounter not far from the same place, before the combatants could close upon one another it fell dead calm, whereupon crowds of the pirates leaped into the sea like savages, swam to the enemy with their knives in their teeth, and attacked with such fierceness that they could not be beaten off, and actually cut out several junks from the imperial fleet. The fortunes of war varied. With provoking impartiality and apparently with no preference on the score of justice or ethics, victory would perch on the standard of the pirate quite as often as on the banners of the righteous defenders of their country. We read of whole squadrons engaged, fighting all day and all night, two days, even three days at a time, two or three hundred junks on a side, and a drawn game at the end. No child's play this. At one time the admiral was lying quietly at anchor among the islands; suddenly two hundred pirate craft slip around the headland and pounce upon him with an onset so furious that twenty-five of

his fleet are gone with their captors before he can get up his anchors and chase them.

These conflicts were not confined to the sea. There were raids on the villages that lined the harbors and rivers. Spies made their way into the bazaars disguised as peddlers, barbers, traders; if they came out alive they brought news to the waiting fleet where were to be found the easiest conquests and the richest booty. Sometimes the villagers fled, and the women and cattle were scooped up by the invaders; sometimes they made a stand, and the bloody struggle proved the valor of the longshoreman as well as of the bandit. Large towns were sacked, and prisoners were gathered not by the score only or by the hundred but even by the thousand. Some unique exploits are recorded. When Mei-ying, the bonny wife of Kee-chu-yang, was captured, she railed at her captors with such stinging eloquence that one of the ruffians knocked her down; whereupon she leaped to her feet, seized him with her teeth and sprang overboard, dragging the brute with her to a watery grave.

It more than once happened that when a commander found the brigands were too many for him and were closing in upon him for the *coup de grâce*, he retreated to the magazine and turned

the tables on them by blowing himself and them out of water. On one occasion by a happy stroke of fortune the pirate fleet was caught and penned in its own lair. Great preparations were made for a mighty stroke of destruction. Twenty-five fire junks were sent blazing in among the anchored craft. The imperial fleet followed; intending by a supreme blow to annihilate the whole bloody horde. With the corsairs it was a fight for life. Any one who has witnessed a Chinese battle can imagine the uproar of such an encounter. Hundreds of the pirates paid the penalty of their crimes, but the mangled remnant of their fleet broke through the blockade and scuttled out to the open sea. The plucky admiral pursued them and sank a few more. After dark they turned back on him and repaid him in kind.

Among such turbulent spirits we need not wonder if the internal conditions were not always serene. In process of time a violent feud broke out in the squadron under the petticoat chief. Words came to blows. The mutineers drew off their clientele and staked their destiny on a pitched battle. The vanquished party after an overwhelming defeat concluded to retire from business and submit to government. We get an inkling of the magnitude of these operations from

the fact that this one capitulation included no less than eight thousand men, one hundred and twenty-six vessels, some five hundred battery guns, and several thousand stand of miscellaneous arms.<sup>1</sup> The commander of the defunct fleet was honored with a government position.

This appealed to the heart of the widow chieftain herself. Perhaps a life spent among scenes of carnage may have begun to pall upon her. She negotiated. After various diplomatic interchanges, assured at last of safety, she decided to capitulate, and with the wives and children of some of her officers the blood-stained tigress presented herself before the governor general at Canton. The pardon accorded by government put an end to what was left of the famous red squadron, and cleaned out the middle and eastern channels of the Canton river. Many of her red-handed followers enlisted in the imperial fleets and were put at once to the work of "pacification." The other fleets were destroyed or saved themselves by submission. The "Scourge of the Eastern Seas" came in with the rest and so retained his worthless head. And the Chinese historian who is my authority for this *dénouement* adds with a cheerful optimism that is hardly sustained

<sup>1</sup> Yung-lun-yuen, 74, 75.

by the sequel, that now, (that is, in 1810) "ships pass and repass in tranquillity. All is quiet on the rivers, the four seas are tranquil, and people live in peace and plenty."

But an opulent commerce, growing richer every year, was very attractive and made piracy as tempting as ever. And so it came to pass that the great "pacification" of 1810 did not stay pacified. The China seas have never since been vexed by such enormous squadrons of buccaneers, nor have witnessed such tremendous battles; but local adventurers have been plentiful, and on occasion have combined into very considerable fleets. The Chinese navy has now and then roused itself to a spurt of zeal, but has never accomplished much in the way of clearing the seas; apparently it has not had much stomach for the attempt. Most of the actual suppression of Chinese piracy has been due to the courage and skill of British tars.

Many officers of the royal navy, while serving in the East, have had a hand in the exciting task of ferreting out and destroying these highwaymen of the sea. Captain St. John, who was thus employed for several years, gives graphic details of his various expeditions, now chasing them into the winding channels which form so large a part

of the intricate network of the Canton river, now surprising them in the snug harbors where they lay concealed behind the hills. His account of their attack on the mail steamer plying between Hongkong and Canton gives a sample of their audacity. A fleet of forty-four junks pounced upon her from the reaches that open into the river; she had to run the gauntlet of them all and was badly hulled with shot before she managed to escape. On another page he describes a large opium junk which lay at anchor close by his own berth. She was bound up the coast to Swatow, and with a crew of forty-five and a full battery of twelve and eighteen pounders seemed so absolutely secure that some forty passengers came on board to take advantage of a conveyance so safe. She got underway at nightfall, but had scarcely cleared the Lymoon Pass before it fell calm and she was obliged to anchor. At midnight a large junk slipped quietly alongside, boarded her and overpowered the watch on deck before they fairly knew they were attacked. The passengers and crew were driven below and secured under hatches and the vessel taken around to a secluded spot on the south side of the island, where every soul on board except a small boy was



lashed hand and foot and flung overboard. The junk was then rifled and sunk.

It is an immense satisfaction to know that these miscreants occasionally fall into their own trap. The fate they prepare for their victims rebounds, and they get a taste of their own villainy. A thrilling adventure of this sort happened to Major Shore of the English army. Having occasion just after the opium war to visit Ningpo, he was obliged to return at once and at night over a route swarming with pirates. He was in a Chinese passage-boat, his own little boy the only other passenger, and his only weapons two double-barrelled duck guns and a brace of heavy pistols. The night was still and he slept with his guns for company. Just before daybreak one of his boatmen, blanched with terror, roused him with the news that the pirates were coming. He seized his arms and leaped on deck. The silvery mist of the dawn obscured his vision, but presently he made out a dark object looming through the haze, a large ugly-looking boat crowded with a gang of assassins stealthily creeping toward his defenseless craft. One can imagine his reflections in the brief interval before they would be alongside. His only chance lay in giving them such a sudden and hot reception that they would suppose his

boat filled with men. He could see them now, a score of bronze villains with long knives in their hands, some of them stripped to the waist, some of them with dirks stuck through the coils of their pigtails. There they crouched like tigers ready to spring, as vicious a lot as ever murdered an honest crew. For just such game as this, if he should have the ill fortune to meet any, he had taken the precaution to load each barrel with a double charge, and as it would not do to miss fire he reprimed his percussion locks with fresh caps. In the deathly stillness he even noticed the ticking of his watch and the beating of his heart, and "wondered how soon both would cease forever."

Crouching behind the rail and scarcely breathing till the boats were within ten yards of each other, he took careful aim and let drive both barrels straight in the ruffians' faces. Shrieks of rage and pain and a crash of tumbling bodies bore witness to the execution. Those two shots cleared the forecastle. Not daring to lose any chances he seized the other gun and blazed away at the crowd in the waist. Another yell, a panic, and a babel of confusion. He was swiftly reloading when a ball from a swivel gun on the pirates' bow whizzed by his head and shivered the mast. The savage who had thus missed his mark was

apparently the leader of the gang, a swarthy muscular chief, whose giant frame loomed dark against the gray dawn. The major instantly covered him with his pistol; a sharp explosion, and the miscreant with his fuse still burning pitched headlong into the black waters beneath.

At this final blow the pirates stood not on the order of their going but incontinently fled. The passage boat with sail and oars scuttled away from so dangerous a neighborhood at the top of her speed. The chastisement inflicted by the brave major taught the brigands a lesson not soon forgotten. It was a long time before they dared attack anything, native or foreign, until well assured that their victim was unarmed, or that they could dash upon him unawares.

While the southern coast seems to have been the favorite field of operation for these Celestial vikings, the northern seas have also suffered from the same dread scourge. None of the estuaries of the north are so admirably contrived for buccaneering purposes as the Canton river, with its countless branches, channels and creeks; but there are plenty of islands and jutting capes and snug coves behind or within which any discreet pirate could conduct his business in safe seclusion. Whoever therefore has had occasion to entrust

himself to wind and wave on errands of commerce or science or travel has found it to his advantage to take account of the corsairs as one of the perils of the deep.

Mr. Fortune describes in his entertaining book a trip he once took on the steamer *Erin* from Ningpo to Shanghai. They had scarcely cleared the river Min below the city when they found themselves in the midst of a squadron of freebooters engaged in blockading the passage between Silver island and the shore, and capturing every sort of native craft that attempted to run the gauntlet in or out. Some of the prizes were plundered at once and turned adrift. The more valuable were taken to the pirates' den to be held until ransomed by their rich owners in Ningpo. Negotiations would be carried on sometimes for weeks, and all the while a posse of Chinese men-of-war sleeping lazily at their anchors within half a dozen miles of the scene. The *Erin* threaded her way through the fleet unmolested, witnessing as she passed the capture of a big Shantung junk which they had decoyed into their ambushade. "During the time they were in sight," Mr. Fortune continues, "we observed several vessels from the north fall into their hands. They were in such numbers and their plans were so well laid that nothing that

passed in daylight could possibly escape. Long after we had lost sight of their vessels we saw and pitied the unsuspecting northern junks running down with a fair wind and all sail into the trap which had been prepared for them."

In a short time, however, the avenging furies were on the track of the outlaws. On her way up the coast the *Erin* met an English cruiser, the *Bittern*, and gave her the needed information. The rendezvous of the piratical fleet was found to be at She-poo, a landlocked harbor a few miles south of Chusan. For She-poo the *Bittern* headed at once with her ally the *Paoushan*, a steamer which had been recently purchased and equipped by a company of Chinese merchants for the protection of their commerce. The pirates had a well organized system of sentries and spies, and knew of their assailants long before they appeared off the narrow entrance to the harbor. Confident in their overwhelming numbers they welcomed the two vessels with derisive yells and deafening clamor of guns and gongs. The steamer towed the brig into position, where she leisurely anchored, and so close to the pirate lines that the storm of shot from their batteries passed over her and splashed harmlessly into the water beyond. Her response was something terrific. The first broad-



side demolished or sank more than one of the braggart junks. Her guns were aimed by British gunners and every shot told. Junk after junk went to the bottom. The derisive yells were turned into shrieks of terror and pain. The harbor was strewn with mangled wreckage and floating bodies. Hundreds of the pirates were mowed down by shot and shell, or were drowned as they dashed overboard and vainly struck out for land. Some two or three hundred succeeded in scrambling on shore, and throwing up a hasty redoubt mounted some guns. A squad of British tars landed in pursuit and by a swift flank movement routed them to the four winds. The victory was supreme. The annihilation of the pirates and their fleet was as great a surprise and almost as complete as though a volcano had suddenly risen in their midst with a fiery eruption in full blast. The throngs of village and country folk who crowded the hillsides around the bay were lost in admiration at the bravery of the "foreign devils." How the plucky little brig and her consort dared venture into the tigers' lair and grapple such an enormously superior force was a miracle quite beyond the Celestial imagination.

But the centuries pass. Even China yields to the pressure of modern life. Railroads are begin-



ning to run their lines of steel toward the heart of the empire. Telegraphs and telephones are spinning their web of wires over the land. The government is minting its own coinage, developing its mines with Yankee machinery, establishing arsenals, steam-works, navy-yards like the rest of the world. Chinese schools are teaching western science. Christian missions are disseminating a higher faith, a purer morality, and a more rational civilization. The same progressive spirit has laid hold of commerce. The sleepy junk cannot keep pace with the swift demands of business, and now along the vast water front of fifteen hundred miles most of the carrying trade is handled by a fleet of jaunty steamers owned by the government and sailed by European officers. The inland waters are open to steam navigation, foreign as well as native, and that means not only an enormous increase of commerce but the penetration of the Chinese world in every direction with western ideas. It may indeed happen that an occasional paroxysm of reaction, like the Boxer massacres, may sweep over some section of the great empire and may for the time turn all progress and all hope into chaos. But the world moves fast. And no oriental barrier can long withstand the flood-tide of modern civilization.

These forward movements are enough to make old Koshinga's bones rattle in his tomb. The modern bandit, too, looks out from his lair with consternation. His old lorchas and mandarin boats are no match for steam. He can do little more than a small and stealthy retail business. A sudden dash upon a lonely trader and a stab in the dark may win an occasional prize; but let him come out into the open and dare anything on a larger scale, and the imperial steam navy would speedily hunt him down on his own blood-stained seas. And if the Yellow Dragon needs help in the operation, many another knight errant like Chinese Gordon would be eager to volunteer.



VI

BOUND FOR THE SUNRISE KINGDOM



## BOUND FOR THE SUNRISE KINGDOM

JAPAN is the Emerald Isle of the east. Its people call it the Empire of the Rising Sun. Its sun is rising fast. The transformation is so complete that the Japan of fifty years ago is forever past and gone. When I dream over again the adventures of that famous Expedition, I seem to be sitting among the shadows of past centuries and watching the argosies of the middle ages, or the bucaneeering voyages of Raleigh and Cavendish and Drake.

In the summer of 1872 Mr. Mori, then Japanese minister at Washington, made a speech in English before an educational convention in Boston. I could hardly credit my senses as I listened and thought of the marvelous change. Only nineteen years before I had witnessed the strange scenes which befell on those mysterious shores, where by the laws of the realm it was death for a foreigner to set his foot; and here already was an educated Japanese gentleman habited in western costume and addressing us in our own language! It was one of the miracles of history. Other mira-



cles, political, commercial, social, martial, have followed in swift succession. And they have so transformed the Japan of the dark ages into an enlightened modern nation keeping step with the civilization of the west, and now standing in line with the other world-powers, that one can hardly remember there ever was a blind past of superstition and isolation.

The interest felt in our oriental venture was not confined to America. Over that secluded land on the rim of the world had always brooded a cloud of mystery; and that threw a sort of halo over the fleet itself. Its progress was watched by all Europe. Japan, too, was on the alert, for the air was thick with rumors, and the coming squadron was casting its shadows before. There are reasons of course why we Americans should feel a special concern in our own enterprise. As it was American diplomacy that unlocked the gates of the Sunrise Kingdom to the outside world, so American institutions have largely furnished the models for the reconstruction of her social and political life. And by the great highway of the Pacific America lies nearest to the marts of commerce and trade thus laid open to the fleets of the west.

But why send an expedition to those distant shores? What was our interest in Japan, or

Japan's interest in us, that should prompt such a mission? The letter which Commodore Perry bore from our government to the Mikado asked for a mutual treaty.<sup>1</sup> The original instrument was drafted in May, 1851, by Daniel Webster, then Secretary of State, and was signed by President Fillmore. There it rested. Perhaps the presidential autograph and seal proved too heavy a dignity. At any rate it never rose after that, and it never got to Japan. In November, 1852, Mr. Webster's successor, Edward Everett, fished it out of the departmental pigeon holes, took it to pieces, and re-fashioned it. Three copies were prepared and were splendidly engrossed in English, Dutch and Chinese. These were enclosed together in a sumptuous gold case; and to make the whole presentment still more impressive to the Japanese mind the gold case was enshrined in a coffer of rosewood. This was the precious missive borne by the American fleet. One would hardly think so small a package would require a

<sup>1</sup> It has greatly interested me to discover that the original suggestion which led to this treaty came from my late neighbor and friend, Hannibal Hamlin, senator from Maine, afterwards Vice President with Abraham Lincoln. "His attention was drawn to the possibilities of trade which the United States might build up with oriental nations. On Feb. 21, 1850, he introduced a resolution calling on the Secretary of State for whatever information he might possess covering these points [abuse of our sailors, and possibilities of trade] and also requesting him to report on the advisability of appointing a commissioner or diplomatic agent to open up amicable relations and negotiate commercial treaties with these nations."

*Life and Times of Hannibal Hamlin*, by his grandson, Charles Eugene Hamlin, p. 230.

whole squadron to carry it. Why would not a single messenger of peace be more appropriate than batteries and guns? The lords of creation do not commonly make their proposals to the weaker sex at the cannon's mouth. But Japan was a somewhat supercilious dame, and had hotly resented such overtures before. She would do so again. There was no reason to expect that the haughty empire would deign to receive, much less to read and answer, any appeal from the outside barbarian world unless backed by a force capable of making its mission respected. America had reason to demand a hearing, and her fleet made it possible to get it. The document entrusted to Commodore Perry asked of the Japanese court two things, friendship and trade. Friendship, for the safety of our seamen; that first and foremost. Many a hapless crew had been driven into their ports by storm or wrecked on their rocky coast, escaping the perils of the deep only to be welcomed to a dungeon or a cage on shore. This wrong must be stopped at all hazards. The American flag is bound to protect the American sailor; and it was high time to teach the island empire of the east how to behave to the citizens of the great republic of the west. And if in addition we could persuade Japan to enter into friendly relations of

trade, the two countries by mutual interchange of productions might promote each its own prosperity and the welfare of the other. It was thought that an Oriental might see that as well as a Yankee. In the end they did. It cannot be said that Japan ever really yearned to be "opened" any more than an oyster does; yet when the time came, she yielded as gracefully as any oyster I ever had the pleasure of meeting.

Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry reached Hongkong in the steam frigate *Mississippi* April seventh, 1853. His arrival produced the usual flurry of rumors; and when the air cleared, the one fact left which specially concerned us was that the *Saratoga* would be detained to form a part of the great expedition. The appointed term of our cruise was up, indeed, or would be by the time we could reach home. But the squadron was small at best, and the commodore could ill afford to spare a single ship; and on our own part a visit to that mysterious land was too big a thing to miss.

We wasted no time in bewailing our fate. Orders flew thick and fast from the flagship, and a month was spent in miscellaneous preparations, diplomatic, financial and commissariat. The beginnings of even the famous movements of his-

tory are prosaic. At last all the fleet was safely gathered at the appointed rendezvous, Napa, the chief harbor of Lew Chew. The *Saratoga* brought from Macao the interpreter, Dr. S. Wells Williams; and as we neared the entrance we met the *Susquehanna* and the *Mississippi* just going in. They had come from Shanghai; and some days later the *Plymouth* appeared from the same quarter. These four with the storeships *Supply* and *Caprice*, constituted our entire force in the China Seas. A small armada with which to "open" an empire!

It might seem as if now that the fleet was all present the one thing to do was to up anchor and make straight for Japan. But expeditions are ponderous things. They do not go off like a rocket. Beside the main issue there are other matters, more and of larger concern than are dreamed of in common philosophy. And while the commodore and his satraps are attending to these, the rest of us can take to the road and idle about in whatever direction the scenery or the people may promise entertainment. We may not get to Japan in this chapter, but if the functionaries are duly deliberate we may have leisure to observe divers and sundry things.

The Lew Chew islands are velvety with a quiet



garden-like verdure which gives them an air of peaceful dignity. The interior is more picturesque than the border-line of the shore. The well groomed valleys are separated from each other sometimes by crags whose ragged heights are festooned with masses of trailing vines, sometimes by smoothly rounded summits where grow side by side with equal ease and no envious rivalry the tropical palm and the northern pine. The natives impressed us as a courteous and sedate folk, somewhat stately and reserved, yet amply endowed with human nature.

A British flag which was flung to the breeze as we neared the anchorage marked the residence of the only white man on the group, the missionary Dr. Bettelheim. We found him an interesting man, sent there by the London Naval Mission, and faithfully working for the good of the natives. He furnished us with vocabularies, and it was not long before we could *parlez-vous* with the people in their own language, at least on such momentous facts as poultry, potatoes, plantains and pigs. Though just outside the tropics, we found the islands richly embellished with tropical growth to the hilltops; and the transparent waters of the bay revealed gardens of many-hued coral beneath. The diving apparatus was at various times brought



into requisition to examine the bottoms of the ships. I remember one afternoon the diver having finished his task took his boat to a submerged reef, threw over his ladder and descended for a stroll in the coral gardens below. It was like wandering through the pleasure grounds of Neptune's palace, among shrubbery, brilliant with part-colored flowers and fruit. Coming to the edge of the reef he threw over his ladder again, and climbing downward came presently to a cave in the cliff which he entered and explored. Perhaps he was prospecting for "full many a gem," which the poet declares "the dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear." One cannot help wondering how the poet knew. Had he been a diver? But all the gems our submarine prospector found were alive and wonderfully chromatic and tame; children of the sea of fairy shape and rainbow colors that were flitting in and out or gathering in respectful shoals around him and watching with eager curiosity the movements of this *lusus naturae* which had invaded their watery realm. They scarcely protested when he even took them in his hands to examine their graceful shape and iridescent scales.

While we lay at anchor two episodes lent a mild flavor of interest to the passing days. One was an official visit of the commodore with a big

retinue to Shudi, the capital of Lew Chew, where they were fraternally entertained by the regent, his staff, and crowds of curious spectators, who in turn were themselves immensely entertained by the band music, the gilt trimmings of their foreign guests, and the general outlandishness of the pageant. The other was an exploring party sent out to examine the geology of the island, its agricultural conditions, the people and their modes of life. Bayard Taylor was a member of this reconnoitering squad and on its return wrote out the official report. This was the first introduction of most of us to the young traveller. He was not yet twenty-nine, but had already acquired distinction both as a traveller and as a writer. His stalwart manhood impressed us. There was a genial look on his face that reflected a generous nature within; yet there were lines which had been traced by suffering; and we learned afterwards of the death of his young wife two years before. On his way home from Egypt and the Soudan he had been turned back by an order from the *New York Tribune* directing him to meet the Expedition in China and accompany it to Japan. He overtook the commodore at Shanghai, and found to his surprise that for an outsider to get a chance in the navy, especially for such an

unusual mission, required not only diplomacy and red tape but a large amount of persistence. The commodore finally consented, and the young aspirant, destined afterwards to be a foreign ambassador himself, was duly rated on the ship's muster-roll as a master's mate—a dignity about corresponding to the rank of passed midshipman. He was not the only man who coveted a place in the expedition. Many of the gentlemen occupying commercial and official positions in Chinese ports were intensely interested, and several of them made earnest endeavors to capture a berth in it. I remember a resident of Hongkong sent me a fervent request for the use of my clerkship for a few weeks, even to the extent of offering a year's salary for the privilege. Bayard Taylor adorned the modest rank of master's mate for some four months, and with the commodore visited Lew Chew and the Bonins before starting for Japan. In both the commodore sent out exploring parties to make a study of the islands and their resources. Bayard Taylor was a member of both missions. He wrote out the official report of the first, and must have had a hand in the other also as he was the leader of one of the two divisions. His diary of experiences in this naval service must have been entertaining, but alas, it is buried

fathoms deep in the naval archives at Washington. In accordance with an order issued by the commodore to all who kept journals of the expedition, he turned it in to the Navy department and never saw it again.<sup>1</sup> When the squadron came away from the first visit to Japan he laid down his mateship and returned to New York in December of that year.

On the ninth of June, leaving two or three of her consorts at anchor, the *Susquehanna* got under way with the *Saratoga* in tow, and left the harbor on a tour of observation. Very nice and comfortable to be tied to the apron strings of a motherly steam frigate when you want to get somewhere and the wind is either dead calm or dead ahead. Our objective was the Bonin islands, or as on Japanese charts the Ogasawara, a group some eight hundred miles to the eastward of Lew Chew. The commodore was in quest of a coaling station for future trans-pacific lines of ocean greyhounds. Nobody dreamed then that the Philippines and Guam would some time drop into our lap. And commodores being no more omniscient than the rest of us, such a historic surprise could not be foreseen; otherwise he would have had no interest

<sup>1</sup> His impressions of the Sunrise Kingdom and of the famous embassy were embodied a year or two later in a volume entitled *A Visit to India, China and Japan in the year 1853*.

in the Bonins, and we should have missed a unique experience.

In due time the islands began to lift in dim tracery on the eastern horizon; a rugged group of volcanic fragments upheaved from the floor of the ocean in some dire geologic convulsion ages ago; serving in recent times for the occupancy of wild hogs and goats and a score of human waifs almost as wild who had drifted thither from sundry corners of the earth. The harbor in which we came to anchor, Port Lloyd, is said to be the submerged crater of an ancient volcano whose fires were long since extinguished by the sea. One can well believe it when he finds his anchorage in eighteen to twenty-two fathoms; he shuffles off a mortal coil of cable and before it stops running out his anchor seems to be going down into the very bowels of the earth.

Here, as at Lew Chew, exploring parties prowled through the interior and found it more mountainous, more tangled and more picturesque than Lew Chew. The heights were crowned to their craggy tops with trees of great variety and often of brilliant beauty. From the summit one could trace the irregular shores of the three main islands, Stapleton, Peel and Buckland, and could count the brood of callow islets and rocks that littered



the sea around them. There was plenty of occupation for the four days we lay at Port Lloyd; climbing the hills, threading the forest, visiting the inhabitants, pulling about the harbor, exploring the cave in the cliff at the entrance. You could pull in through the arch by boat; inside, an enormous cavern big enough to hold the ship. We landed on the beach within; and up on its topside, as a Chinaman would express it, saw another opening through which we crawled and found ourselves facing the ocean outside. I remember digging from a seam in the cliff close by a tolerable specimen of opal. The seine netted for us bushels of delicious mullet, and trips to the reefs outside brought in *chelonias* enough to make turtle soup for the whole ship's company for weeks. Some of these immense armor-plated beasts were four, five, even six feet long. Two or three of them we carried to sea with us, and when the men were holystoning the decks in the early morning it was a favorite amusement with them to trot out the turtles and have a ride or rather a crawl on their backs. They were automobiles, but not of the racing kind.

The hook and line brought us only fisherman's luck. One calm lazy afternoon the first lieutenant proposed a fishing party outside. The cap-



tain's gig was borrowed for the occasion, and into the stern sheets he stowed himself, the doctor, the master, and by a streak of good luck the clerk. In a very few minutes our boat's crew put us on our fishing ground and there we lavished the various seductive arts known to the craft. In vain; only one solitary fish could we persuade to leave the briny deep and come in out of the wet, but that one was so gorgeously caparisoned he must have been a member of the royal family. We were fishing in some eight or ten fathoms. Looking over the side we could clearly see bottom through the liquid azure, and not merely the bottom but a submarine rose garden of coral, and shoals of little finny cupids playing to and fro in the watery bowers as brilliant as the coral—a kind of living symphony of color. My fish appeared to be about the size of my finger when he cautiously essayed a lunch off my hook and then started so suddenly for the upper regions; but when he came sailing in over the thwarts he was twelve or fifteen inches long, and from stem to stern one glowing splendor of scarlet more brilliant than any goldfish I ever saw. We held a naval court martial over our trophy and sent him on board the flagship to sit for his portrait to Mr. Heine, the artist of the expedition. And

when afterwards the Congressional Report of the Japan Expedition came out, there was my fish, not so resplendent as in life, but a very fair counterfeit.<sup>1</sup> As no other of the scaly cherubs below seemed to yearn for the same honor we pulled in our lines and headed for the little rocky islet just off the southern foreland of the port. It had no beach and its craggy gnarly sides went sheer down into the crystal depths. A low jagged point gave us a landing spot to bundle ashore. We had to watch our chance and jump; and by either miracle or luck the feat was accomplished without broken bones or a souse in the sea. We found the little island supporting a denser population to the square acre than London or even Canton; bipeds, too, though of another family; but enjoying life as much and attending as strictly to business. Most of the inhabitants were solemnly sitting on their eggs; a monotonous life I fancy, though I never tried it, but rewarded with ample dividends. They showed no signs of fear, which I am ashamed to say was because they did not know us. And we strolled among battalions of gannets and seagulls and shags so densely crowded that we could scarcely move without stepping on them, leisurely examining their

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II, plate III : description, p. 257.

plumage and even handling their eggs. They meanwhile kept up a subdued gossip and chatter which I suppose was their way of expressing their opinion of their outlandish guests. It ought to have been favorable, for we came away without killing a bird, but left them to their peaceful labors of populating the cliffs and waves with no fear of Malthus before their eyes. That was the nearest I ever came to attending Chaucer's *Assembly of Fowles*.

I have credited the Bonins with a score of occupants. To be strictly accurate there were thirty-one: three or four Americans, three or four Englishmen, and one native of sunny Portugal; the Kanaka wives and the half breed children made up the sum total. The head chief of the island, so far as there was any head, was a man named Savary, a waif from Massachusetts. In token of his primacy the commodore presented him with an American flag, which was run up at once on the flagstaff over his bungalow among the trees. It was a pleasant sight for the first thing in the morning to greet our eyes when we came on deck. Peel island was the only one of the group occupied; the citizens of the others were wild hogs and goats. The settlers lived a quiescent semi-civilized subtropical life, cultivating a few acres,

raising their own sugar and tobacco, obtaining other commodities from the outer world by barter with occasional passing ships, to which they furnished such natural supplies of wood and water and food as the island could afford. During our stay three whalers appeared off the port and sent in their boats for the purpose. In all this half century since I have met but one person who has ever visited this out-of-the-way group. That was a former teacher in Yokohama, now the wife of a banker in America. On one of her voyages to Japan the ship in which she was a passenger was driven by a typhoon to take refuge in Port Lloyd. While there she made the acquaintance of the settlers, especially the house of Savary, and later a little granddaughter of the white chief was for some years a pupil in her school at Yokohama. At the time of her visit the Japanese government had assumed control and formed a colony; and there were then already some five hundred Japanese in residence. The old independent solitude so dear to the original barbaric rovers had vanished, and the islands were beginning to hum with the common activities of life. While writing these pages I have by accident discovered one of their industries. Having occasion to open a can for the

household, it gave me an agreeable shock to find it was canned turtle from the Bonins.

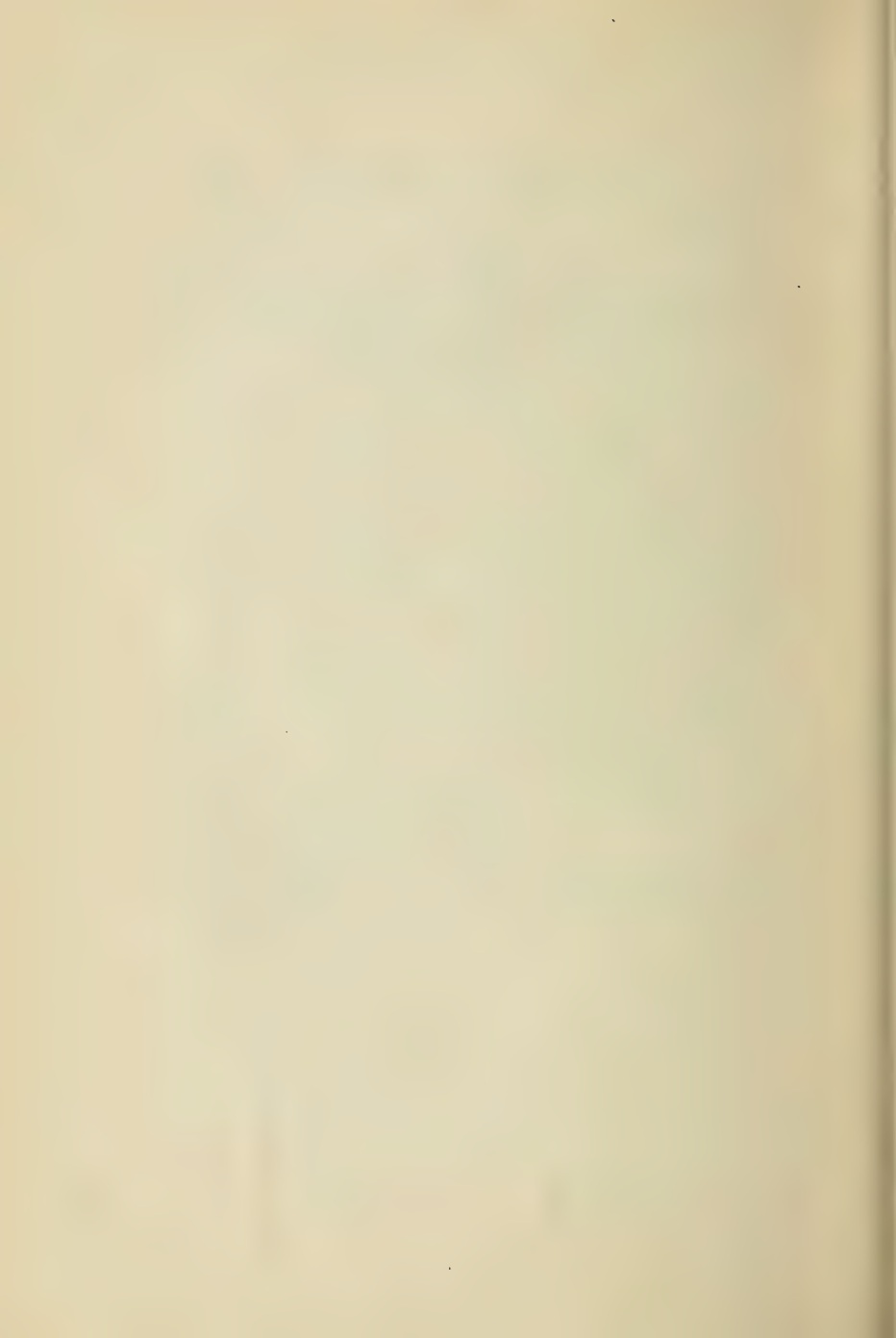
We left these charming islands Saturday morning, the eighteenth of June. The last thing I did on shore was to fill my pockets with lumps of chalcedony which lay scattered among the pebbles on the beach. As I was showing my treasures on board, some of them beautiful specimens, one of the ward-room officers who had entered the navy as a midddy in his boyhood, and so had gleaned his education not from schools but from general experience in knocking about the world, said eagerly, "Now, Clerk, some of these stones ought to be polished and set; as soon as ever you get back to Boston I would take them to a dilapidary!" Bless his heart, that was just what I did. And the "dilapidary" did such fine work that one of my lady friends prizes her chalcedony pin and cuff buttons to this day.

Five days later we were at anchor again in Napa harbor, ready now for the final move on Japan.

VII

THE FAMOUS PERRY EXPEDITION  
TO JAPAN





## THE FAMOUS PERRY EXPEDITION TO JAPAN

AT last on the second of July, 1853, four of the fleet got underway for Japan. The *Saratoga* took her place in tow of the *Susquehanna* as before, and the *Plymouth* in tow of the *Mississippi*. The *Supply* storeship was left for the time at anchor in Napa harbor, and the *Caprice* under command of Lieutenant William L. Maury was sent to Shanghai. Our course followed the chain of island groups which extend to the northward and eastward from Lew Chew to Nippon, and some of the time in sight of them. One of the last we saw and passed was Ohosima, a well-bred volcano which was enjoying a quiet smoke all by itself. It may wake up some day and start its furnaces, as its fiery neighbor Torisima has been doing while these pages have been in process of incubation. There is plenty of time; geology will furnish all it wants. And it may yet make its record in history and hold up its head with Vesuvius and Krakatoa and Mont Pelée. They are uncertain characters, these volcanoes; you

can never be quite sure when any given island is preparing to burn out its chimney. The safest plan is to follow Confucius' advice about the gods, — "Respect them, and keep out of their way."

We made moderate speed and reached Japan on the eighth of July. It was Friday, a memorable day in our calendar. That morning the lookouts at the masthead echoed through the fleet the rousing call, "Land ho!" We rushed on deck. There it was, at last. There it was, a dark silent cloud on the northern horizon, a *terra incognita* still shrouded in mystery, still inspiring the imagination with an indefinable awe, just as it had years ago in the studies of our childhood at school. We came up with it rapidly. But the rugged headlands and capes still veiled themselves in mist, as if resolved upon secrecy to the last. About noon the fog melted away, and there lay spread before us the Empire of the Rising Sun, a living picture of hills and valleys, fields and hedges, groves, orchards and forests that tufted the lawns and mantled the heights, villages with streets a trifle wider and houses a little less densely packed than in China, and defended by forts mounted with howitzers and "quakers," and fenced with long stripes of black and white cot-

ton, which signified that the fortifications were garrisoned and ready for business. On the waters were strange boats skimming about impelled by strange boatmen, uncouth junks wafted slowly along by the breeze, vanishing behind the promontories and reappearing in the distance, or lowering their sails and dropping their four-fluked anchors in the harbors near us. And towering above all, forty miles inland, like a giant man-at-arms standing sentry over the scene, rose the snowy peak of Fusi-yama, an extinct volcano fourteen thousand feet high, one of the most shapely cones in the world, and well named "the matchless mountain."

Our squadron comprised, as already noted, two steam frigates and two sloops of war. For equipment we mustered sixty-one guns and nine hundred and seventy-seven officers and men — a respectable force for the times, but soon eclipsed and forgotten in the vaster armaments of the Civil war, and of our late scrimmage with Spain. Such a warlike apparition in the bay, small as it was, created a powerful sensation. A Japanese writer informs us that "the popular commotion in Yedo . . . . was beyond description. The whole city was in an uproar. In all directions were seen mothers flying with children in their arms and

men with mothers on their backs. Rumors of an immediate action, exaggerated each time they were communicated from mouth to mouth, added horror to the horror-stricken. The tramp of war-horses, the clatter of armed warriors, the noise of carts, the parade of firemen, the incessant tolling of bells, the shrieks of women, the cries of children, dinning all the streets of a city of more than a million souls, made confusion worse confounded.”<sup>1</sup> Of all this we were quite unconscious. We had no idea we had frightened the empire so badly, the capital being some forty or fifty miles away from our anchorage. But that the town near us was thrown into convulsions by the big “black fireships of the barbarians,” as the Japanese called us, was sufficiently evident. Before our anchors were fairly down a battery on Cape Kamisaki sent a trio of bombshells to inquire after our health, or perhaps to consign us to perdition. But they exploded harmlessly astern, and we sent no bombshells back to explain how we were, or whether we intended going in the direction indicated. Our friends on shore knew something of guns and gunnery — that was plain. How much, we could not tell. But our glasses showed us that not all the black logs frowning at us from their

<sup>1</sup> Nitobe. *Intercourse between the United States and Japan*, p. 46.

portholes were genuine. Some at least were "quakers," that could not be fired except in a general conflagration; like the battery of a native guard-boat in the harbor of Nagasaki that once upon a time capsized in a squall; various things went to the bottom, but most of her guns floated!

By the time we were well anchored and sails furled and men piped down, swarms of picturesque mandarins came off to challenge the strange arrival and to draw around the fleet the customary cordon of guard-boats. This looked like being in custody. The American ambassador had not come to Japan to be put under sentries. He notified the mandarins that his vessels were not pirates and need not be watched. They pleaded Japanese law. He replied with American law. They still insisted. Whereupon he clinched the American side of the argument with the notice that if the boats were not off in fifteen minutes he should be obliged to open his batteries and sink them. That was entirely convincing, and the guard-boats stood not on the order of their going but betook themselves to the shelter of the shore.

I well remember that still star-lit night which closed our first day in Yedo bay. Nothing disturbed its peaceful beauty. The towering ships



slept motionless on the water, and the twinkling lights of the towns along the shore went out one by one. A few beacon fires lighted on the hill-tops, the rattling cordage of an occasional passing junk, the musical tones of a distant temple bell that came rippling over the bay at intervals through the night,—these were to us the only tokens of life in the sleeping empire.

A sleeping empire truly; aloof from the world, shut in within itself, utterly severed from the general world-consciousness, not awake to the opportunities and privileges it was later so suddenly and so brilliantly to achieve as one of the world-powers, not even conscious that there was any such high position to be attained. While the Expedition is resting at its anchors, and the empire around is asleep, let us take the chance to paint in a bit of the background. A historical reminiscence or two will enable us more fully to appreciate the aim and the ultimate success of the enterprise.

The Sunrise Kingdom, like the telescope, was discovered by accident. In 1542, when Henry VIII of England, Charles V of Germany, Knox, Calvin and Luther were the chief characters on the European stage, a Portuguese vessel bound to Macao in China was driven by storms into

Bungo, a port of Kiusiu. It was the first meeting of Japanese and Europeans. It seems to have been mutually agreeable. The accidental visitors were dazzled with the riches of the Oriental paradise they had found, and the natives were pleased and entertained with their outlandish guests. When the news reached Europe it started a crusade of adventurers to the eastern seas. There was a gold fever, and all the commercial nations of the west had it. The flags of Portugal, England, Holland, France and Spain waved in succession over the waters of the newly discovered empire. The Japanese were amiable, and a busy barter was maintained for some scores of years.

Traders and speculators were not the only visitors in that distant mart. Some ten years later the Jesuits resolved to signalize the beginnings of their new order by converting those rich and dissolute Gentiles. Their crusade was successful, like the other. It is related that when the first missionaries, as they were called, reached the field of their operations, some of the courtiers desired an edict against the propagation of the new faith. "How many religions have we now?" asked the emperor. "Thirty-five," was the answer. "Very well," said the tolerant monarch, "one more will hurt nobody—let them preach." And

they did preach. And Xavier, the renowned Jesuit apostle and saint, though within the year he returned to China to die, lived long enough to baptize multitudes of the penitent pagans, grandees as well as commoners and peasantry. Other missionaries flocked to the harvest. The Jesuits were followed by Dominicans and Franciscans. The splendid robes and ritual of the church proved attractive and large numbers of the people were gathered into the Roman fold. Shrines were deserted and priests found their custom wasting away.

This was a result not entirely palatable to either the priesthood or the court. Several of the emperors recalled their apostate subjects to the mourning gods. Persecutions began. The foreign monks and friars were accused of political intrigue. The story is a bloody one and covers a whole generation of tragedy and horror. Let us turn the page and simply record the fact that Christianity was expunged from Japan. The final catastrophe was the fall of Simabara in 1637 and the massacre of some forty thousand Christians. The histories tell us that the bodies of the martyrs were tumbled together into one vast pit and over it was raised this defiant inscription: "So long as the sun shall warm the earth let no Christian be so bold as to

come to Japan; and let all know that the king of Spain himself, or the Christian's God, or the great God of all, if he violate this command, shall pay for it with his head."<sup>1</sup> Then the murderous empire wiped its sword, shut its gates, and barred itself in against all the world. One of the precautions by which it protected itself against Christianity and the civilization of the west was the famous ceremony of trampling on the cross; the astute pagans rightly divining that no foreigner would consent to such a sacrilege who had enough of the religion about him to disturb the empire. The ceremony was performed every year, as methodically as taking the census or collecting the taxes, and was only abolished as late as 1853, after our first visit to Japan.<sup>2</sup> Once a year officers went to every house with boxes containing the crucifix and images of the Virgin. These were laid on the floor, and all the household from octogenarians to infants in arms were required to tread upon them as a proof that they were not Christians. This law was enforced among the Dutch, the only Western nation that maintained its foothold in the hermit land during all those darkened centuries. It is said that the cross was

<sup>1</sup> MacFarlane, *Japan*, pp. 49, 50.

<sup>2</sup> Griffis, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, p. 349.

carved into the stone thresholds of their warehouses so that they could neither go nor come without trampling upon it. The placid Hollanders do not seem to have been much distressed by the requirement; their convenient religion was easily detached and left in Europe. One of them, we are told, one day wandered away from the warehouses on the island of Dezima across the bridge into the streets of Nagasaki, and was suddenly halted by a Japanese patrol. "Are you a Christian?" was the challenge. "No, I am a Dutchman!" He was allowed to pass.

It is time to return to the ships. We left them sound asleep at anchor off Uraga the night of our arrival in Yedo bay. Yet not all sound asleep, for a more vigilant watch has rarely been kept than was kept that night on board that fleet. Nothing happened however — except a brilliant display of meteoric light in the sky during the midwatch, an omen which terribly alarmed our friends on shore, as portending that the very heavens themselves were enlisted on the side of these foreign barbarians. The commodore alludes to the phenomenon in his narrative, and adds the devout wish, "The ancients would have construed this remarkable appearance of the heavens as a favorable omen for any enterprise they had under-



taken; it may be so construed by us, as we pray God that our present attempt to bring a singular and isolated people into the family of civilized nations may succeed without resort to bloodshed.”<sup>1</sup> In spite of the menacing sky we all survived, Yankees and natives, and in the morning were all alive and ready for business. During the day our new friends came off to visit the ships and were some of them admitted on board. These first interviews were a constant surprise to us; we found them so well informed. They questioned us about the Mexican war, then recent; about General Taylor, and Santa Ana. On board the *Susquehanna* one day a Japanese gentleman asked the officer of the deck, “Where did you come from?” “We came from America,” was the reply. “Yes, I know,” he said, “Your whole fleet came from the United States. But this ship — did she come from New York? or Philadelphia? or Washington?” He knew enough of our geography not to locate our seaports on our western prairies or up among the Rockies — a pitch of intelligence not yet too common among even our European friends. One of them asked if the monster gun on the quarter deck was a “paixhan” gun? Yes, it was, but where and how could he

<sup>1</sup> Official *Narrative of the Expedition*, &c. I, p. 236.



ever have heard the name? When two or three midshipmen were taking the sun at noon, one of them laid his sextant down and a Japanese taking it up remarked that such instruments came from London and Paris and the best were made in London. How could a Japanese know that?

Our colloquies were carried on in Dutch through our Dutch interpreter, Mr. Portman, the educated Japanese being then accustomed to the use of that language somewhat as we use French. We naturally supposed, therefore, that all their information had come through the Dutch, the only nation beside the neighboring Chinese and Koreans that had for the last three centuries kept its hold upon the good graces and the commerce of Japan. But we afterwards found that the Japanese printers were in the habit of republishing the text-books prepared by our missionaries in China for use in their schools. The knowledge of America which we found thus diffused in Japan had come straight from Dr. Bridgman's *History of the United States*, a manual written and published in China, which had also had, what the good Doctor never dreamed of, a wide circulation in the realm of the Mikado. That book had already prepossessed its readers in our favor. The following winter it was my privilege to make the acquaintance of the author at

his home in Shanghai, and to sit often at his genial board. It has been one of the regrets of my life ever since that I could not tell him and his accomplished wife of the mission of good on which the little text-book was speeding its way in the empire of the rising sun. But at that time, alas, none of us knew it. They have both long since gone home to the heaven they loved, and probably never learned in this world of the good they had thus unconsciously done.

The next day was Sunday. According to custom divine service was held on board the flagship. The capstan on the quarter-deck was draped with the flag and the Bible was laid open upon it. Chaplain Jones took his station beside it. I do not know that any record was made of the service; presumably the chaplain followed the usual liturgical form, and preached a brief sermon. But the hymn sung on the occasion has become historic; it was Watts' solemn lyric

“ Before Jehovah's awful throne,  
Ye nations, bow with sacred joy.”

It was sung to the tune of Old Hundred; and led by the full band the familiar strains poured in mighty chorus from two or three hundred lusty throats, with a peal that echoed through the fleet and wafted the gracious message to the distant

shore. The Japanese listened with wonder; and their wonder deepened into amazement when they found that the whole day was to be observed as a day of rest and none of them could be admitted on board.<sup>1</sup>

On Monday the secular tide was turned on again and diplomatic overtures began in good earnest. In their official dealings with us it was interesting to see how the authorities clung to their time-honored policy of exclusion. It was a curious contest of steady nerve on one side, met by the most nimble parrying on the other. First they directed the commodore to go home; they wanted no letters from American presidents, nor any treaty. But the commodore would not go home. Then they ordered him to Nagasaki, where foreign business could be properly transacted through the Dutch. But the commodore declined to go to Nagasaki. If then this preposterous barbarian would not budge, and his letter must be received, they would receive it without ceremony on board ship. But his Western mightiness would not deliver it on board ship. Then they asked for time to consult the court at Yedo, and the commodore gave them three days — days big with

<sup>1</sup> Griffis, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, p. 324.  
Official Narrative of the Expedition, &c. I : p. 240.

fate; but exactly what happened at court we may never know. This much is certain, that our reluctant friends yielded at last; that pestilent letter would be received, and commissioners of suitable rank would come from court for the purpose. Even after all preliminaries had been settled they begged to receive the letter on board ship, not on shore. But the Rubicon had been passed.

Some three miles below our anchorage a little semicircular harbor makes in on the western side of the bay, and at the head of it stands the village or hamlet of Kurihama. That was the spot selected for the meeting of the Western envoy and the imperial commissioners, and there the Japanese erected a temporary hall of audience. It was a memorable scene. The two frigates steamed slowly down and anchored off the harbor. How big, black and sullen they looked, masterful, accustomed to have their own way, full of pent-up force. Our little flotilla of fifteen boats landed under cover of their guns. We were not quite three hundred all told, but well bef feathered in full uniform and armed to the teeth; a somewhat impressive lot, and yet of rather scant dimensions to confront five thousand native troops drawn up on the beach to receive us, with crowds of curious

spectators lining the housetops and grouped on the hills in the rear. However we were ready for anything and had no fear of treachery. The emblazonry of those Japanese regiments surpasses any powers of description that have been vouchsafed to the present deponent. Their radiant uniforms and trappings and ensigns must have been cut out of rainbows and sunsets; and the scores of boats fringing the shore heightened the effect with their fluttering plumage of flags. There was one thing not lively; the officers of these gorgeous troops sat in silent dignity on campstools in front of the line! — a kind of military coma which the hustling regiments now tackling the great Northern Bear in Manchuria evidently have not inherited and could not comprehend.

The situation was unique, not likely to be forgotten by any who participated in it, either American or Japanese. It was a clear calm summer morning. As our lines disembarked and formed on the beach the commodore stepped into his barge to follow us. Instantly the black "fire-ships" were wrapped in white clouds of smoke, and the thunder of their salute echoed among the hills and groves back of the village. To the startled spectators on shore they must have seemed suddenly transformed into floating volcanoes.

And when the great man landed they gazed with wonder, for no mortal eye (no Japanese mortal) had been permitted to look upon him before. In all the negotiations hitherto he had played their own game and veiled himself in mystery. They could communicate with so lofty a being only through his subordinates. This was not child's play. It was not an assumption of pomp inconsistent with republican simplicity. Commodore Perry was dealing with an oriental potentate according to oriental ideas. He showed his sagacity in doing so. At this time he was fifty-nine years old, a man of splendid physique and commanding presence. He had already lived through a varied experience which had helped to train him for this culminating achievement of his life. Endowed with strong native powers he had risen in mental capacity and executive force with every stage of his professional career.

The war of 1812, in which also his famous brother Oliver Hazard and two younger brothers served, gave him his first baptism of fire; and later the Mexican war, service in various parts of the world civilized and savage, duties on naval boards at home, investigations and experiments in naval science, naval architecture, naval education—these and numberless other methods of serv-



ing his country both in the professional routine and in general affairs, had developed his judgment, his mental acumen, his breadth of vision, his knowledge of men; and thus had prepared him for his high mission as ambassador and diplomat. Unquestionably his insight into the oriental mind, his firmness and persistence, his stalwart physical presence, his portly bearing, his dignity, his poise, his stately courtesy, were prime factors in his success as a negotiator with an Eastern court. He was the right kind of man for America to send on such an errand to such a people.

On his arrival we marched to the hall through an avenue of soldiers, our escort being formed of sailors and marines from the four ships. Leaving the escort drawn up on the beach, the forty officers entered. We found ourselves within a broad canopied court of cotton hangings, carpeted with white, overlaid in the center with a scarlet breadth for a pathway leading to and extending up on the raised floor of the hall beyond. Many two-sworded officials in state robes were kneeling on either side of this flaming track. Within the hall sat—not in Japanese fashion but on chairs—the imperial commissioners, the princes Idzu and Iwami, surrounded by their kneeling suite. They

were both men of years, fifty or sixty perhaps; Idzu a pleasant intellectual looking man, Iwami's features narrow and somewhat disfigured by the small-pox; both attired in magnificent robes richly embroidered in silver and gold. The vacant seats opposite the commissioners were taken by the commodore and his staff. Between the lines were the interpreters, on one side a native scholar on his knees, on the other erect and dignified the official interpreter of the squadron, S. Wells Williams LL. D., a well known author and missionary in China. Behind them stood a scarlet lacquered chest which was destined to receive the fateful missive for conveyance to court. Overhead in rich folds drooped the purple silk hangings profusely decorated with the imperial arms and the national bird, the stork. I had scarcely noted these few details and glanced at the genial face of Bayard Taylor as he stood behind the commodore taking notes, when the ceremony began. It was very brief. A few words between the interpreters, and then at a signal entered two boys in blue followed by two stalwart negroes, probably the first samples of the ebony type that had ever shaded the landscape of Japan. In slow and impressive fashion the two darkies brought in the rosewood boxes which contained the

mysterious papers. These were opened in silence and laid on the scarlet coffer. Prince Iwami handed to the interpreters a formal receipt for the documents. The commodore announced that he should return the next spring for the reply. A brief conversation in answer to a question about the progress of the Taiping rebellion in China, and the conference closed, having lasted not more than twenty minutes. A short ceremony, and witnessed by not more than fifty or sixty persons out of the entire populations of both the great countries engaged; but it was the opening of Japan. It brought together as neighbors and friends two nations that were the antipodes of each other not only in position on the globe but in almost every element of their two types of civilization.

That the Japanese have themselves appreciated the significance of this memorable meeting appears in the amazing historical developments which have followed all over the empire along the lines of commerce, industrial art, education and religion, and is shown also by innumerable public utterances from the platform and press; and they have recently commemorated the occasion by erecting a monument at Kurihama in honor of the American commodore. But this later material can wait

till the end of the chapter; we will keep on here with the main story.

This first act of the mission was now achieved, and the squadron rested from its labors. A great weight was lifted off its mind. The next day, with lightened conscience, it set itself to the easier task of surveying and sounding the bay, exploring future harbors, locating islands and rocks, measuring distances and plotting charts. These uncanny operations were watched with some solicitude by the coast guards. They offered no active opposition, though once or twice we had occasion to show how thoroughly each boat was armed and ready for emergencies. The *Saratoga*, not willing to be outdone in this hydrographic work, located one shoal with undoubted accuracy by running upon it full tilt. Fortunately the wind was light and the bottom smooth; no harm was done to either ship or shoal. We were not proud of the achievement; but the commodore did us the honor to immortalize it and us by naming the sandbar the "Saratoga Spit;" and that title it bears to this day. Some years later it acquired a tragic interest when the U. S. S. *Oneida*, coming down the bay to sail for home, was run into in the night and sunk by the British mailship *Bombay*.

She went down close by the *Saratoga* Spit, carrying with her most of her hapless crew.

A few days after the Kurihama conference we left the Empire of the Rising Sun and returned to the Central Flowery Kingdom. On the seventeenth of July, as silently as they had entered nine days before, the two frigates steamed out of the bay with the two ships in tow. Outside they separated and went their several ways; the two steamers and the *Plymouth* back to Lew Chew, the *Saratoga* to Shanghai. We parted in a storm. If our Japanese friends could have seen our belabored ships scuttling away into the darkness and foam they would have taken it for a special interposition of their wind-god, wreaking vengeance on the western barbarians for their temerity. The gale grew into a tempest, and the tempest into a typhoon, the largest though not the most vicious of the four encountered by the *Saratoga* in those uneasy seas. We compared the logbooks afterward of several ships that were caught in different sections of its enormous circuit, and found that it was more than a thousand miles in diameter, and in its progress swept over the larger part of the north Pacific ocean. It raged for several days, and every vessel in our fleet got entangled in some part of its vortex. Our own ship, the

*Saratoga*, was under orders for Shanghai; and after the gale struck us, with battened hatches and sea-swept decks we rode on the outer rim of that cyclone almost all the way back into the mouth of the Yang-tse-keang. It was riding a wild steed, as all sailors know who have tried it, but we got to Shanghai all the quicker. Six months we lay there at anchor off the American consulate. It was the time of the Taiping rebellion. As if to give us further object lessons in the oriental way of making history, one night the Taipings inside the walls rose and captured the city. The imperialist forces came down from Peking to retake it. And about once in three days we were treated to a Chinese battle — sometimes an assault by land, sometimes a bombardment by the fleet of forty or fifty junks; all very dramatic and spectacular, occasionally tragic, frequently funny. But, as Kipling says, that is another story and deserves a chapter of its own.

Meanwhile here is the place for a codicil in which to record the Kurihama celebration just referred to. During the autumn of 1900 Rear Admiral Beardslee, retired, was travelling in Japan, and took occasion to revisit the scene of the famous landing. In 1853 he was a young midshipman on board the *Plymouth*, and was in



charge of one of the boats of the flotilla. He easily identified the spot, and finding it neglected brought it to the attention of the *Beiyu-Kwai* — "Society of Friends of America" — who assumed the patriotic task of renovating the place and commemorating the event. The occasion was an inspiring one. On the fourteenth of July, 1901, the forty-eighth anniversary of the conference, and on the spot where the hall of conference stood, there assembled a distinguished company of dignitaries of the empire, the officials of the *Beiyu-Kwai*, Admiral Beardslee and other representative Americans, together with many thousand interested spectators. Baron Kaneko presided and addressed the company. Other addresses followed, from the American minister Colonel Buck, Viscount Katsura, Admirals Rodgers and Beardslee, U. S. N., and the governor of Kanagawa. It was a specially felicitous circumstance that when the supreme moment came the monument was unveiled by Admiral Rogers, a grandson of Commodore Perry, and at that time commanding the American squadron in the east. The memorial is a shaft of unpolished granite standing on a massive base and rising to a height over all of thirty-three feet. The side facing the bay bears this inscription in Japanese:

This monument marks the landing place of Commodore Perry of the United States of North America. Marquis Ito Hirobumi, Highest Order of Merit.

On the reverse is an inscription in English which reads thus:

This monument commemorates the first arrival of Commodore Perry, Ambassador from the United States of America, who landed at this place July 14, 1853. Erected July 14, 1901.

This solid memorial will forever dignify the little hamlet of Kurihama as the birthplace of the new Japan and the scene of the beginnings of a great international friendship.

In this epilogue belongs also the record of another celebration more recent and of a more personal flavor. The Japanese in foreign lands have a patriotic custom of strengthening the home ties by celebrating the birthday of their emperor, which falls on the third of November. The year 1903 marked a half century from the first landing of the Perry expedition on Japanese soil, and Mr. Uchida, the Japanese consul-general in New York, conceived the happy idea of adding still further prestige to the usual celebration by commemorating that famous event. Invitations were issued to the descendants of Commodore Perry and to the now few survivors of the fleet. Out of

the more than two thousand officers and men who composed the personnel of the expedition less than a score are known to be living, three of whom were present at the reception. To these three, who had not met for half a century, it may well be imagined the occasion was impressive, not to say thrilling. The forty or fifty Japanese gentlemen and ladies present, and as many more Americans, some of them descendants of the famous commodore, and others who had been resident in the Mikado's dominions or were specially interested in the country and its people, made a brilliant assemblage. The memories were inspiring. The half century had enlarged the dimensions of the event; rather had brought out and developed its natural results along the lines of trade, industrial art, commerce, education, intellectual and moral enlightenment, and so splendidly that the growing light reflected back on the original act and revealed its magnitude. With these sentiments were mingled tender thoughts of shipmates long since gone, memories of scenes that made us sigh

— for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still.

On the walls hung a large old-time colored lithograph representing the landing at Kurihama,

a print struck off soon after the return of the fleet, and loaned for the occasion by one of the commodore's daughters. Near it was a companion picture of the same size, a photograph of the Perry monument at Kurihama.

After the social hour the consul called his guests to order and made an address of welcome, alluding to the emperor, the expedition, and the presence of some who had been members of it. Two other brief speeches were made, one by Admiral Rodgers, a grandson of the old commodore, who spoke of his grandfather's mission in Japan, his own service in the east, and the unveiling of the Kurihama monument. The other was by one of the survivors, and was of course largely reminiscent of those distant scenes and descriptive of our famous old commander. It gives one a funny sensation to stand before a brilliant company as a relic of some ancient bit of history, and be watched by such curious eyes while you step out of your own past generation into the light of modern times to make your speech!

When the tables were brought in for the banquet it fell to us three "relics" with three or four friends to surround the same board; a sumptuous improvement on a middies' mess in the steerage of a man-of-war, and seasoned with high memories.

As we broke bread together and the current of converse moved swiftly on, it seemed almost as if we were surrounded by the unseen forms of mess-mates who had long since sailed on to the haven beyond. And back of all was the thought of the Sunrise Kingdom herself, the hermit land of half a century ago, so exclusive, so mysterious, but now so teeming with the activities of a new civilization, the resources of a new power, the dignity and responsibility of a new place in the world. The occasion itself, the sentiments it inspired, and the distinguished company uniting in the celebration, all combined to make it a memorable evening.

VIII

THE TAIPINGS IN SHANGHAI:  
AN EPISODE OF THE GREAT REBELLION





## THE TAIPINGS IN SHANGHAI: AN EPISODE OF THE GREAT REBELLION

FROM Japan to China is not a long voyage, if you ride on the rim of a cyclone. The memories linger still of a rusty and belabored man-of-war wearily crawling up the waves and then plunging down in roar and foam, rolling almost on her beam ends and burying her batteries alternately out of sight; the air full of driving spray, wind shrieking through the rigging, sails flapping to pieces, hatches battened down, everything tumbling, chaotic, dismal and wet. At last the tempest chased us into the turbid waters of the Yang-tse-keang, and sheered off down the coast in quest of easier prey.

It does not strike one like a river — the Yang-tse-keang — but a broad gulf, whose low alluvial shores are far and away out of sight of each other. Up some sixty miles you turn south into a branch, the Wusung, and thread your way up through a motley fleet of foreign ships, opium hulks, lorchas, junks, tanka boats, sampans and other Celestial craft. By the aid of a Chinese pilot, a little wind,

storms of pidgin-English, and divers bumpings with awkward junks, you traverse some fifteen miles more and come to your moorings off the city of Shanghai.

At least that was the way the *Saratoga* got there in August, 1853. We dropped anchor off the foreign quarter. It was a scene of busy prosperity. First of all, the bund, an esplanade lined with residences facing the river as if on parade, clean broad streets, warehouses and godowns stored with the products of the empire; and over all the protective flags of the consulates, English, American, Spanish and French. Farther up the river to the south lay the Chinese city behind a wall twenty feet high and a moat twenty feet wide, environed even on the river side with suburbs as dense and crowded as the streets within; its houses jammed and dovetailed together like the pieces in a puzzle; its thoroughfares too narrow for any but pedestrians and sedans; its atmosphere redolent of those pungent aromatic odors which no visitor in the great empire could ever mistake or ever forget—for in the Central Flowery Kingdom landscape has not only form and color but smell; its sombre level of gray tiles overtopped and relieved by the French Catholic cathedral in the southeastern quarter, the spire of

an American Episcopal mission near the centre, and a forest of masts rising from an indescribable chaos of junks along the river front. The city stands within the forks of the Wusung and the Hwangpu, which here unite and carry their common burden forward into the Yang-tse-keang. The Hwangpu brings down from Suchau and other great inland marts hundreds and thousands of country barges laden to the water's edge with the produce of field, garden, shop and loom. The Wusung, though with its best endeavors less than half a mile wide, accommodates the heaviest merchantmen as well as immense fleets of native craft which swarm hither to share and swell the enormous traffic in rice, tea and silk. A snap shot from the quarter-deck in the cool of the afternoon, if kodaks had arrived on this planet in those faraway days, would have given one a lively mixture; lumbering tea-boats, freight-hoys, yachts, sampans, arrow-like shells out for pleasure or practice, and all manner of shipping from almost every maritime power under the sun. On shore a still livelier turmoil—a bustling Mongolian pandemonium, of Orient and Occident commingled. Byron's picture of a carnival in Venice would answer quite well for the motley array one encounters on the Shanghai bund:

And there are dresses, splendid but fantastical,  
Masks of all times and nations, Turks and Jews,  
And harlequins and clowns, with feats gymnastical,  
Greeks, Romans, Yankee Doodles and Hindoos.

We had been there but a month in the midst of these busy conditions when suddenly, like the proverbial thunderbolt out of a clear sky, something happened. Things have a way of happening in China. Of late it has been the Boxers. Then it was the Taipings. Outbreaks of popular violence in the Great Flowery Kingdom have been frequent and in many ways show a common origin and a family likeness. The opium war of 1842, the Taiping rebellion, the French and English invasion of 1857-60, the recent eruption of the Boxers, even the collision with Japan in 1893-4, may all be credited in a general way, as they have been, to the irrepressible conflict between two types of civilization. Wherever the sea meets the shore there is a foaming line of surf. And wherever the advancing tide of Western life meets the solid mass of Mongolian conservatism the impact produces more or less of tumult. In the case of the opium war China was trying to choke out the fatal drug from the empire, and England, to her lasting shame, was making reprisals for the loss and fastening the curse upon the unwilling

victim. The uprising of the Boxers was a savage attempt to sweep all foreigners from the sacred soil and bar the gates against the polluting contact of the western world. The Taiping rebellion was a more tremendous tragedy than either, and had for its aim a blind and blundering endeavor to overthrow the Manchu dynasty. Unlike as these conflicts have been, they were the effervescence of the same chronic spirit of repugnance against foreign interference or even contact, which secretly ferments in the Celestial mind.

There can be no doubt however that by these bloody stages China is making progress. The empire is slowly leavening with the forces of the new century. In return for the great ideas and inventions she had long since given to the world, some of them hoary and moss-grown with antiquity, the world is now forcing upon her the new and larger methods of life which have developed in the swifter nations of the west. A rapid evolution is going on in her commerce, in her modes of business, in railroad and telegraph, in new lines of manufacture, even in her military methods. Modern armor is usurping the place of the old jingals and spears. Some of her battalions have had the benefit of foreign drill. The empire had a lesson pounded into her in her quarrel with



Japan, and another lesson from the Powers on the subject of Boxers. She will remember them both. In the garrison captured by Admiral Seymour near Tientsin was found war material of the latest make and of enormous quantity — a sight to open Western eyes. And the viceroy of Hankow is not the only Celestial patriot who has seen far enough ahead to establish vast plants for the making of modern guns and ammunition. The contrast between the war apparatus these plants are turning out and the antiquated weapons we saw the Taipings using half a century ago would be ludicrous if it were not so startling. If the world keeps on arming these countless millions and drilling them in the latest arts of destruction, and does little or nothing to elevate them in either Christian character or international ethics, an explosion may come big enough to shake all Christendom. The great empire outnumbers the total populations of Europe and America put together; a fact which may well give us pause. For if with modern equipments and European methods the Chinese should discover their power they might become literally a "yellow peril" to all the rest of the planet.

Tai-ping means Great Peace, a term not altogether appropriate to the wholesale plundering,

ravaging and slaughtering that came to be perpetrated under its banners. The full euphemism by which the leader styled himself was "Heavenly Father, Heavenly Elder Brother, Heavenly King of the Great Peace Dynasty of the Heavenly Kingdom." Heavenly Kingdom means China — little as the unenlightened might suspect it. And though the whole title sounds like a flourish of profanity, it only expresses what the arch-rebel sincerely claimed to be. It was not personal conceit; it was a sober fanatical faith in himself and his mission. Like most disturbers of our planet, the Tai-ping-wang was a visionary; literally so, for his great ambition began in the visions that glimmered around his sickbed when a young man of twenty-four. He had been in heaven; had met there a "venerable old man" and an "elder brother," with whom he held interviews. They appointed him to his great work on earth. He held a divine commission from them to conquer and rule China. No personage of less pretensions, and a Chinaman at that, could have asked Sir George Bonham whether the Virgin Mary had not a pretty sister for him, the Heavenly King, to marry! His visions sustained him through his period of obscurity into the dawn of success, when adherents trooped around him and weary marches

issued in brilliant campaigns. Nor did the golden dream utterly fade until in the final crash of defeat and ruin he took his own life in his palace at Nanking.

At first the rebellion had an aim. That was to overturn the Manchu dynasty, which had ruled the empire ever since the conquest in 1644, and restore to the throne a native Chinese prince. The Taiping claimed to be a descendant of the Mings, the last native dynasty which had occupied the Chinese throne. It was also claimed that he had in his possession the banner which distinguished the last emperor of that house. It had been preserved by a sage and handed down with the prediction that he who unfurled and bore it would overturn the hated Manchu and recover the ancient sceptre. It had magical virtues, and under this talisman the rebels were surely marching to victory. With this main purpose was curiously mingled a sort of hybrid Christianity. The Heavenly King had in his youth received instruction from an American missionary.<sup>1</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Issachar Roberts, a Baptist missionary. I met him in Hongkong, in 1852, and found him enthusiastic in his hopes of the results that would come to his beloved China from such a glorious revolution. At the request of the rebel leader he visited the camp and was warmly welcomed. He remained some months and assisted the Taipingwang in establishing his novel reforms. Whether it was the unique form of baptism adopted by the rebels in place of immersion—wiping the breast with a wet towel in token of a clean heart—or whether a growing incompatibility of temper between the two leaders, or even graver matters of discord, I cannot say; but his mission came to a sudden end, and he saved his head by disappearing from camp. See Martin, *A Cycle of Cathay*, pp. 131, 132.

had carried to his home in the interior some religious tracts prepared by a countryman, Leang Afa. Imbibing the new opinions he became an eager zealot and iconoclast. Ten commandments were promulgated somewhat like the ten of the Old Testament. A form of worship became part of the camp routine. And wherever they marched temples were looted and the impotent gods were left strewn in fragments on the ground. The two motives—a rescued country and a new religion—proved attractive. The Taipings were brave soldiers, and when led by competent chieftains performed deeds which deserve a place in history. Beginning in the autumn of 1850 near Canton, the revolt grew from a handful to an army, and spread from a single centre till it had infected whole provinces. Sweeping rapidly northward the insurgent forces cut a vast swath through the heart of the empire, mowing down cities, hamlets, towns, everything that came in their way. When Nanking was taken by storm and its defenders put to the sword, the Heavenly King selected the great city for his capital and there set up his banners and his throne. This was in March, 1853. The next thing was to reduce Peking. An army was despatched to the north for that purpose. It never reached Peking; yet the exploit was one

that might well deserve the admiration of any soldier of the West. In six months these insurgents marched fifteen hundred miles, traversed four provinces, fought numerous battles and defeated every army sent against them, took twenty-six cities, and won their own subsistence from the country they traversed and the enemy they fought. An American, who spent most of his life in China and was a contemporary of the great struggle, declares that under the circumstances it was a feat quite equal to Sherman's exploit of ten years later, the famous march to the sea.

The rebellion lasted from 1850 to 1865. In its later years it degenerated into a predatory war, and its armies into hordes of banditti. The Heavenly King, as events proved, had no broad view of his own future, no capacity for organizing government, no large plans for establishing his dynasty of Great Peace, and scarcely a shred left of his mongrel Christianity. It was just a blind remorseless struggle for conquest, trusting to luck or to heavenly visions for a favorable issue. The fantastic costume of his troops, their outlandish flags, their wild hairy aspect (they did not shave their heads) struck terror into the hearts of their enemies; and wherever they went they left their track in ashes and blood. What torments the



wretched empire was suffering from both its foes and its defenders may be seen in the fate of Hankow, a populous city which within a period of two and a half years was taken by assault by one army or the other no less than six times, and was turned literally into a heap of ruins. Ningpo would furnish an example still more striking. After it had been recaptured by the allied forces, French, British and Chinese, Captain Dew says in his official report of the action, "I had known Ningpo in its palmy days, when it boasted itself one of the first commercial cities of the empire; but now on this eleventh of May one might have fancied that an angel of destruction had been at work in the city as in the suburbs. All the latter, with their wealthy hong and thousands of houses, lay leveled; while in the city itself, once the home of half a million of people, no trace or vestige of an inhabitant could be seen. Truly it was a city of the dead." <sup>1</sup>

It was estimated by foreigners resident in the empire at the time, that the struggle cost on both sides fully twenty million lives. This frightful aggregate is not to be credited to actual slaughter in battle, nor to the later ravages of wounds and disease. The attention of the government was of

<sup>1</sup> Williams, *The Middle Kingdom*, II: 609.



course concentrated on the war. Every available soldier was drawn to the front. Whole provinces were almost depleted of their laborers. That meant wholesale neglect of the Grand Canal. At numberless points therefore the abandoned dikes broke down and immense sections of once populous territory were flooded. And still worse the refractory Hoang-ho, which has a habit of changing its course every few years and ploughing a new channel to the sea, more than once burst its banks and spread desolation right and left, sweeping farms, flocks, villages, even cities, with their hapless occupants, into indiscriminate ruin. These terrible floods, together with the famines that usually followed in their wake, may be accounted responsible for a large proportion, perhaps half, of the twenty millions.<sup>1</sup>

It was in this great contest that Chinese Gordon was assigned to a command in the imperial army. As the war dragged on it had become more and more evident that the Great Peace held out no hope for the distracted empire. There was in it no emancipation from the Tartar yoke, no elevation of the masses into freedom, no melting of

<sup>1</sup> Any one interested in looking up the biography — one might say indeed the autobiography — of this insubordinate river, will find a brief and clear account by Professor Pumpelly in *Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge*, No. 202 (1866); together with eleven charts which show the different forms the river has taken within the past twenty-five hundred years.

pagan night into the dawn of a Christian day. Some of us had hoped and believed that we were about to witness the moral and political regeneration of an empire. It had come to be instead a scramble for loot and blood. Every new turn in the progress of the rebellion only added to the disappointment of its more thoughtful friends; and more than one foreign officer entered the imperial army to aid in stamping out the horror. General Ward,<sup>1</sup> who served in 1860-'61, was succeeded by another American, Burgevine, and he by two Englishmen, Holland and Cooke. General Ward drilled the army and really raised it from a rabble into a disciplined and effective force. And though the foreign community regarded him as an adventurer, the Chinese looked up to him as an able leader, and after his death at Tsz'ki in 1861 erected a shrine to his memory before which incense was kept burning for many years, perhaps to this day. Gordon accepted his appointment in March, 1863, and with Li Hung Chang took command of the imperial forces. He improved upon the methods of General Ward; and within little more than a year, drilled and led by him, the Ever Victorious army turned the tide of defeat and began to vindicate its vainglorious title. By

<sup>1</sup> Frederick G. Ward, of Salem, Mass.

a series of thirty-three battles, several of them brilliant and daring exploits, some of them carrying fortified cities by storm, some of them general actions in the field, the great Taiping rebellion was suppressed. In China, as well as before Sebastopol and in the Soudan, the famous soldier exhibited not only great military genius but still more a generous devotion of self to the service of others. It did not win a Celestial shrine and smoking incense, but it is commemorated in the inscription recorded later on his monument at St. Paul's, — "always ready to give his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, and his life to God."

The adventures chronicled in this chapter formed an episode in this tremendous tragedy of the Taipings. For five months we were curious spectators of a Chinese war, and the scenes we witnessed left ineffaceable memories. We began with sympathy for the new cause. We ended with sympathy for the lacerated empire. A contest in which a Christian knight like Gordon could embark his conscience and his sword was worth waging, and is worth recording. Some of the battles we saw before he arrived were highly dramatic, and when they did not draw blood were spectacular and entertaining.

On the night of the sixth of September, 1853, as the *Saratoga* was lying peacefully at anchor off Shanghai, a band of Canton and Fohkien assassins rose within the city, expelled the *taotai*, put some of his officials to the sword, sacked their houses and seized the government. A reign of terror followed. For some days these Celestial Robespierres and Marats had their own bloody way. Everything that could get away fled. Junks scuttled off from the docks as fast as they could unmoor, until scarcely a sampan was left, and the river front was as bare as an abandoned canal. Multitudes left their homes and sought safety in flight. At last the conspirators fearing that the city would become literally depopulated, closed the gates and made desertion a capital crime.

Within a month the imperial forces assembled to retake the fallen city. They came trooping over the plains in straggling battalions, flocking in fleets up the river from the coast and down the streams from the interior. We visited their camps. It was a sight worth seeing. I would not speak disrespectfully of the "tigers" of China — a name often borne by the national troops, not on account of their man-eating propensities, nor for their bravery, but simply because they so frequently carried the brute's head painted on their shields.

We found them a mongrel crowd, swarthy, boorish, lank, and much bedizened in their parti-colored uniforms. (Bear in mind that this was seven years before General Ward, a whole decade before Gordon.) Now and then a big trooper looked well-fed and unctuous. But the rank and file were tatterdemalions; their barbaric accoutrements and their still more barbaric selves seemed not so much an army as a sort of freak museum. In those faraway days, coming from the interior as they did, they had never seen a westerner, and we were as great curiosities to them as they were to us. They thronged around us. They fingered our clothing and felt of our hands and faces. They unbuttoned our collars and inspected our necks. Nor would they be satisfied till we had bared our arms and bosoms to convince them that our pallid complexion was not a kind of wash that would rub off.

Their first summons to the insurgents only met with derision. And with stolid Mongolian patience they set themselves down to the task of beleaguering the city. Their operations on the river side were in plain view from our decks and we watched many a battle. Some were serious, some were comic. In their land skirmishes they commonly left their artillery at the camp, and



equipped with spears, swords, knives and jingals, they charged toward the walls brandishing their weapons, waving their flags, beating their gongs, blazing away with their jingals, hooting and scoffing at the enemy. They were met with similar tactics from the ramparts — gongs, shouts, banners, bravado and guns; which last did the business and sent the assailants scampering back toward the camp. Rallied by their screaming leaders they would get into line again and repeat the same manœuvres, with the same results. Sometimes the rebels sallied from the gates and chased their assailants off the ground, to be driven back in turn to the shelter of the walls. And so on for hours; the same ground would be fought over, or rather raced over, half a dozen times in a single fight. On both sides discretion seemed to be generally regarded as the better part of valor. Neither party betrayed any anxiety to get too near the other. Each brave doubtless felt a wholesome respect for his own skin. The risks involved were too much like those referred to by Lord Chatham<sup>1</sup> when he was speaking of General Gage shut up in Boston: "His situation reminds me, my lords, of the answer of a French general in the civil

<sup>1</sup> Speech on removing the troops from Boston, House of Lords, Jan. 20, 1775.



wars of France—M. Condé opposed to M. Turenne. He was asked how it happened that he did not take his adversary prisoner, as he was often very near him. ‘J’ai peur,’ replied Condé very honestly, ‘J’ai peur qu’il ne *me* prenne!’ ”

In the early part of the siege there were some odd encounters in which the losses were by desertion. A storming party would advance brimful of fight. A parley ensues. Then as if inspired with sudden valor half the assailants rush to the walls, plant their scaling ladders, dash up the parapet, swarm on the ramparts, and drawing up their ladders after them fraternize with the rebels. The balance of the assaulting party gaze stupidly at the phenomenon, and then turn campward sadder and wiser men; somewhat hastened on the home stretch by a parting volley from their late comrades in arms.

To the Chinese the art of gunnery was then in its infancy. The handling of their batteries was skilfully awkward. To fire was the main thing, specially if it made the welkin roar; but how the piece was loaded and whither aimed did not appear to be matters of prime importance. The charge was loose powder, and that of a poor make. When a bombardment was prolonged till after dark we frequently saw the powder burning and

dropping into the river many rods away from the muzzle of the gun. And China had been using gunpowder in battle for four centuries, and in fireworks for a thousand years before that. One would think that in that length of time even slow-moving China might have learned to make it better; or that the powder might if left to itself have grown better by some process of evolution. In the attacks on the land side, instead of shot and shell the missiles often consisted of a bucketful of slugs, nails, fragments of pottery, brick, old iron, pebble stones and the like—a charge which would spread enough to sow an acre of ground. The north gate of the city was a sort of tower or bastion, with an eighteen-pounder mounted in the embrasure above the portal. A few rods away stood two houses belonging to an American mission and occupied by two missionary families. The families had been removed at the outbreak of hostilities; but to keep the premises from being seized and garrisoned by either party as a convenient point from which to attack, the gentlemen were obliged to stay by and hold them under the protection of the flag. One of these teachers, though a southron and used to firearms, was of somewhat nervous temperament and did not enjoy his lonely vigils. He invited me to share them

and I often did so. The enclosure stood in the centre of the common field of action; and on two of those occasions we were roused from our slumbers by a midnight battle going on right around the house. If any of my readers have ever been present in a really serious Chinese shindy, they can easily imagine the hullabaloo; the infernal racket and din — the shouts, yells, screams — the discharge of jingals and fire-arrows — and every few moments the explosion of the big gun over the gate. It is not altogether playful to look out from your chamber window and see the midnight blackness lighted up by incessant flashes from muskets and jingals, or to trace by its comet tail of sparks the flight of a rocket fire-arrow, knowing, too, that every discharge may carry death to some miserable combatant. I have one of those fire-arrows beside me as I write, picked up on the field of battle; it is dumb now and has never confessed its murderous deeds. How much havoc the noisy gun on the bastion may have carried into the ranks of the assailants, I cannot say; but the miscellaneous charge peppered our house every time from foundation to ridgepole, and the next morning we picked out nails and slugs by the handful.

Among other tricks of strategy the besiegers

attempted mining. On one occasion they found themselves on the eve of success. The workmen had burrowed through the soil till they were actually beneath the walls. The tidings flew to camp. Great preparations were made. A doughty column was ready to storm the breach, and mighty deeds were promised. Meanwhile the rebels were not idle. They had spies. And having located the approaching mine they had sunk a deep counter-trench at right angles and kept it filled with water. When the forty miners reached it the thin partition of clay burst with sudden roar. A brief struggle in the dark and all was over. That was the end of their experiments under ground.

I was threading the narrow streets one day toward the walls when I suddenly came upon a crowd. It was not so noisy as Chinese mobs often are. There was no laughter, and the chatter here and there was in a subdued undertone. They were watching something. I elbowed my way in and not being an adept in the vernacular inquired by signs what was the matter. They pointed up at the side of a shop. There hung, suspended by its cue, a ghastly head. It was a young brave who had been caught and decapitated by the imperial "tigers." Poor wretch, the bruises and slashes on his pate showed how hard he had fought for

life. But his dream of military glory had come to an untimely end. He was of no further use to his day and generation than to dangle his skull from a peg by the roadside as a warning to his fellow-rebels. What honors his heroism may have won for him in the Chinese heaven I cannot say, not having yet travelled in those parts. Peradventure he may have rivalled the high reward bestowed on his countryman General Chin. That redoubtable warrior commanded the forts at the mouth of the Wusung in the opium war of 1842 and there fell in battle. In recognition of his services his family was ennobled, his image was set up in Shanghai and for many years incense was kept burning before it. But far beyond these trivial honors was the promotion he received above. According to a current rumor in Shanghai two or three weeks after his death, Chin sent down word that he had been elevated by the supreme ruler of heaven to the position of second General-in-chief to the Board of Thunder; so that though he could not exterminate the foreign devils while in the flesh, he could still give them an occasional shock from the clouds!

My path led me presently out into the open, and across a paddy-field directly to the wall and the north gate. I was wandering along in a so-



bered mood when bang went the eighteen pounder on the bastion just before me. The gunners doubtless meant to aim at the imperialist camp about a mile off; but as they had loaded up with a generous overdose of slugs, nails, bits of glass and rock, the charge spread like a fan and went screaming through the air, ripping off showers of leaves and twigs from the trees, plowing up the grass, and doing all sorts of execution except damaging or frightening the enemy. Some of the slugs struck and rebounded in the gravel at my feet; whereupon I shook my fist at the gun's crew and beat a masterly retreat, in good order and without loss of baggage or temper. Coming back to the house of a young missionary whom I knew, I rang at the gate. He sent a coolie to admit me, but meanwhile called from the window, "Roll yourself up small—the balls are flying lively this morning." I went in and we gathered up his penates for flight. Several balls had riddled his house, smashing the crockery, puncturing the library, going through his books quicker and more thoroughly than he had ever done himself, and turning things generally into bric-a-brac. His family had been sent to the foreign quarter that morning; and putting together the necessary



traps we presently fastened up the premises and followed them.

There was a battle every two or three days. The land attacks were frequently seconded by the fleet on the river. It was interesting, and sometimes droll, to watch the evolutions of forty or fifty junks beating about on the tide and bombarding the fort at the east gate. The firing was irregular and incessant. The river was ploughed by the passing shot and well be-fountained with jets of spray. Occasional stray balls went over the fort into the city, but did little harm beyond frightening the dogs, splintering the tiles, and sending up a cloud of dust from a demolished roof.

The rebels had purchased a foreign barque and a brig, and these with three or four native gunboats they had heavily armed and equipped, and had moored them off the east gate battery. The imperialists attacked them. After a furious duel with broadsides two junks laid the two vessels alongside and boarded them. A desperate hand-to-hand fight on deck made short work of it. We could see the wretched crews leaping overboard in mortal terror and making for the shore. Not one lived to reach it. The victors jumped into their boats, dashed after them, and with clubs and spears despatched them in the water.

One afternoon there was an unusual stir in the fleet. We were on the alert to watch developments. Presently a large flotilla of boats gathered from the various junks and pulled up by us gaily decked with banners and loaded to the gunwales with warriors intent on valorous deeds. They grinned at us as they passed, as if to assert a familiar brotherhood in arms and to claim our endorsement of the bloody job they had in hand. Their objective point was a small river battery near us—so near that we could see the faces of the combatants. Some of us younger sprigs of the navy, to get a better view of such an object-lesson in actual warfare, scrambled like monkeys to the mizzentop and spent the balance of the afternoon taking in a birdseye view of the scene. The rebels made a desperate stand and for a time the fighting was hot enough to satisfy Mars himself. Swords, jingals, spears, clubs, pounded, punched, roared and flashed on both sides. The rebels broke. Some dropped and died where they fought. Some fled, and their streaming wounds printed their tracks on the pavement in red. The victors turned the captured battery on the fugitives. How many were mowed down as the fatal shot ploughed those crowded streets we never knew. They must have been consumed in the flames where

they fell, for the troops fired the houses in order to burn out the suburbs, and whole streets melted away before our eyes. We could see the forlorn inhabitants snatching whatever they could save and rushing in a maddened stream for the foreign quarter; some loaded with the contents of their shops, some with the tools of their trade, some with pots, pans, baskets, tables on their heads and children in their arms, some with their old mothers on their backs. The wind blew fresh and fanned the flames; and the whole district looked like the crater of a volcano. All that afternoon and night and all the next day the fires went roaring like a furnace and devouring whatever was left to burn. When they stopped for lack of more worlds to conquer, there lay spread before us the ashes of temples, dwellings, tea gardens, honges, godowns and shops — two square miles swept level with the ground — a dismal holocaust to the god of war.

A few days later the whole fleet got underway. That east gate battery had not been silenced. Something must be done. All the afternoon the whole rabble of forty or fifty junks were beating to and fro off the battery and pounding away with boisterous and imbecile fire. We youngsters watched it as usual from the mizzentop. The

admiral seemed easily satisfied with the glory and noise he had achieved, and very likely was hungry for his supper, for by five o'clock he signalled the fleet back to the anchorage. But two junks panted for more. Breaking from the line they dashed across the river and beached themselves directly under the ramparts, determined to carry the fort or die in the attempt. It was brilliant and brave; but in the expressive rhetoric of the shops, "too muchee no can!" The rebels were literally too many for them. Murderous volleys poured from guns little and big, and blazing fire-balls came crashing down upon their decks, till the successive explosions appeared like one continuous flash. Both vessels were soon in flames. Their gallant crews driven from their guns fought like wild beasts at bay. In the midst of the bloody struggle the fire reached the magazines and with a frightful explosion both vessels went thundering into the sky. An instant hush silenced every gun. An enormous white sulphurous cloud rose majestically and spread umbrella-like over the scene, and out of its folds came dropping big guns, blazing sails and spars, and fragments of men. The numbers destroyed on the two junks may not have exceeded the list of those who so suddenly went to their death on our ill-starred

*Maine* at Havana; but in this duel on the Wusung not a soul survived to tell the tale. A few days after, in a lucid interval between the battles, some of us strolled up there to view the remains. It was no light task to pick our way through the burnt district, where the streets were obliterated and ragged piles of ruin faced us wherever we turned. By tacking and wearing toward every point of the compass we at last zigzagged our way to the spot. There lay the blackened hulls, or rather the under shells of them, all the upper works gone, clean scooped out by the force of the explosion. Our friends the enemy were greatly flattered by our interest in their prowess, and issuing from the fort gathered round and overwhelmed us with voluble attentions. Not only that, but they took us within the fortress and showed us its impregnable defences. Whereupon we made another interesting discovery. There was the table-boy of our port steerage mess installed in the fort as a high official in silks and buttons. He had skipped some weeks before. And what better qualification could be desired for a captaincy in the rebel artillery than that he had served in a "Melican man-o'-war?" He saw that we recognized him; but his value as a servant had not been so priceless nor his loss so irrepara-



ble that we cared to disturb his dreams of military fame.

In February, 1854, we were summoned away from these lively scenes to attend to what a Celestial would call "pidgin" of our own. There followed the second chapter in the story of the Japan expedition and the signing of the treaty. The *Plymouth* took our place at Shanghai, and the *Saratoga*, bearing the new treaty, spread her white wings for home. And while our rusty old sea-bird was flying, rolling, plunging homeward round the Horn as fast as canvas and tempest could drive her, events went tripping on almost as nimbly in the land of the yellow dragon. The *Plymouth* found plenty of interesting things to watch.<sup>1</sup>

Matters had not been running smoothly between the Celestials and their foreign neighbors. An unexpected stroke of idiocy on the part of the Chinese commander brought affairs to a focus. An American merchant on his way to his place of business in his own private boat, over which the American flag was flying, was hailed by one of the war junks and ordered alongside. He paid

<sup>1</sup> On account of our *alibi* the adventures contained in the rest of this chapter I cannot record as an eye witness. But fortunately I have a letter from a friend who happened to visit Shanghai in a merchantman soon after we left, and who saw and shared in the events. I find some assistance also in incidental allusions from various travellers of the day.



no attention to the order and kept on his way. A second and more peremptory hail was accompanied by a shot, and he pulled to the junk to demand the cause of the outrage. He was seized and made prisoner, his flag torn to shreds and trampled under foot. When the affair was reported to the commander of the *Plymouth* an officer was instantly sent with a boat's crew who rescued him. But the insult to the flag was a graver matter. After consultation with the American consul Commander Kelly sent notice to the Chinese chief and to the authorities of the city that on the following Monday at one o'clock the fleet should as an atonement publicly salute the American flag, or he would blow every junk out of water. Monday morning he got underway, moved down and dropped anchor in the circle of junks with ports open, guns trained, and men at quarters; and at the appointed moment the stars and stripes rose to the masthead of the admiral's flagship and was humbly saluted with Chinese powder. One refractory junk started to escape, but a ball from the *Plymouth* crashed through her ribs and brought her round into line. As an additional lesson some of the junks were then dismantled, their guns spiked, and their small arms thrown overboard.

Such drastic discipline one might imagine would

teach the Chinaman manners. But the conceit of the great empire was more swollen then than now. She would deal as she pleased with the few foreign barbarians sprinkled along her shores. It required many lessons to convince her—if indeed she is yet convinced—that the persons and interests of other nations cannot be touched with impunity.

The next unpleasantness happened with the British flag. An English gentleman was out one afternoon for a constitutional with his invalid wife who was borne in a sedan. Without warning or provocation they were rudely beset by some straggling soldiers from the imperial camp. The British consul promptly demanded satisfaction. The infatuated officials not only refused but posted notices warning all foreigners to leave Shanghai and all foreign ships to vacate the harbor within a week. The proclamation was drawn in blood-curdling rhetoric, and if not complied with threatened to lay the whole foreign quarter in ashes. A consultation was held. There were but two men-of-war in port—the American sloop *Plymouth* and the British frigate *Encounter*. It was decided to land the marines of both ships and as many of the bluejackets as could be spared; and these with a volunteer squad of a dozen or fifteen tars from each merchantman in port made up a battalion

of some four hundred troops armed to the teeth and of immeasurable grit. The intent was simply to protect the foreign quarter. But the derisive attitude of the imperial army and the occasional shots from camp became annoying and brought on a collision. It is not often that four hundred have a chance to attack fifteen thousand. But they did it handsomely—bridged the moat, leaped the mud parapets, and stormed the camp with such a wild and riotous rush as to overturn tents, jingals, men and dogs together, and send the Celestials scuttling up country like an army of rabbits. I doubt if our boys at Santiago could have done it in better style. They chased the fugitives for some miles. A few came limping back with flesh wounds, and one or two lives were sacrificed in the affair. It cost the Chinese, alas, a long list of wounded, missing and dead, and proved a memorable lesson.

These irregular conflicts made it manifest that it was to the common interest of both foreigners and natives to emancipate the stricken city and turn the pirates out. The Imps too (as the rebels called them with a pardonable abbreviation of the foreign term) had become an unbearable nuisance, and the downfall of the city would bring things to an end. Their departure would be hailed with

applause. It was neither English nor Americans however who brought matters at last to a crisis. The nearest foreign suburb to the native city happened to be the French, which lay on the north side bordering the moat. The situation came to be past endurance, and the French decided to join the Imps in a combined assault. The attempt was made Jan. 6, 1855, and proved a failure. Another a month later produced a like result. A year of fighting had given the rebels fine practice and they had profited by it. But though not dislodged they were alarmed, and concluding that other such assaults might make the place too hot for them, decamped in the night of February sixteenth. Like the rest of their compatriots they left mementos of their departure in bloody and smoking ruins.

This ended the Taiping tragedy in Shanghai. Five years later another rebel army marched on the city, ravaging and plundering the country as it advanced; but the French and English had armed to protect their homes, and joining the imperialists inflicted upon the invaders a bloody repulse. Another invasion was ordered by the Taiping-wang in 1862; and it was the menacing operations of this filibustering force which finally led to the appointment of Chinese Gordon as the

leader of the Ever Victorious army in 1863. The result is well known to the world.

It is not surprising that the great insurrection should have been hailed at first as the advent of a national deliverance. The Chinese themselves, those at least who cared enough about their country to give it any thought, hoped that it might emancipate them from their Manchu conquerors and reinstate the native dynasty on the throne. Foreigners, in so far as they expected anything serious, hoped that it might result in the further opening of the reluctant empire to western civilization and western trade. Both were doomed to disappointment. What had seemed to rise as a golden dawn soon darkened, and finally closed in a night of terror, like one of their own frightful typhoons. And when the Heavenly King took his own life in his palace at Nanking, the curtain fell not on the pathetic failure of a people's struggle for freedom, but on the fortunate collapse of a tragedy which had nothing left for motive but vengeance and pillage and lust. With that final blow the empire was released from the toils of a fiery conflict which was rending her heart and life. Peace proclaimed itself in the usual flourishes of Chinese rhetoric, and the busy myriads settled down to the industries that constitute their life and



that hold the great loose-jointed country together.

With all her faults there is something about the big empire that wins the visitor who treads her shores. Those who know the Chinese best come to like them most. Their quaint peculiarities we can smile at and condone. They can do the same with ours. One must admit that the Chinese character is a medley of contradictions; honest, industrious, practical, shrewd, patient, docile, good-natured, yet capable of frenzied outbursts of cruelty, untruthful and yet the bankers and merchants men of probity whose word is as good as their bond, phlegmatic, unemotional, unimaginative, conservative and superstitious, with a national vanity the most egregious and a civil service the most corrupt on the globe, content with things as they are and incapable of initiative. We are quite mistaken if we imagine the whole vast domain peopled with the same kind of peasantry we find in our laundries and kitchens. Among the staple productions to be sure are pirates and Boxers, along with the common varieties of ruffian and rogue, such as flourish on western soil. The rabble can be treacherous and vindictive, as recent events have shown; and yet the national disposition is pacific and obliging. In all ranks may be found that contented self-compla-



gency which would be ludicrous if it were not such a bar to their own progress. Yet back of it all, allowing for the discordance of oriental and western ideas, the bulk of the nation is right-minded, level-headed and just. There is in the average Chinaman a certain sturdiness and steadiness of temperament, a masculine common sense, a genius for industry and honesty, which make him the Anglo-Saxon of Asia. He is not poetic but practical, not transcendental and speculative but persistent and plodding. It makes one's blood boil to think of the unpatriotism and the blundering medieval mismanagement that made such a mammoth of an empire and swarming with such practical matter-of-fact people let itself be whipped by little Japan. But the defeat carried with it a prodigious lesson, which China has slowly set herself to learn. The two peoples are widely different. If the Japanese might conceivably be compounded by melting together a Frenchman and a Greek, with a dash of Arab, to make the Chinaman one needs only Tartar and Teuton. If the Celestial may not be so brilliant as the Japanese, neither is he so nervous and fickle. He may be slow, but he is virile, has stuff in him, and equilibrium. China cannot be the peer of Japan in the finer arts of painting, poetry, ora-

tory, and the general embellishments of life; but she has great capacity for the practical arts, and long before the Sunrise Kingdom had been heard of in the west she had bestowed on the world such priceless commodities as silk, paper, tea, gunpowder and the compass. No one who really loves China can listen with patience to the schemes of western avarice, or think calmly of this proud antique ever being in danger of vivisection into "spheres of influence." If the Powers leave the empire in her integrity, as agreed upon by the two great antagonists, Russia and Japan, in their treaty of peace just now completed, it is safe to predict that the future will show an "open door" much wider open than ever before to the best influences of the west. And when China has been leavened and refined by the effect of Christian civilization, as she will be in time, she will help more than any other native force in working out the commercial, religious and social regeneration of the vast continent of Asia.



IX

THE EXPEDITION AGAIN AND THE  
OPENING OF JAPAN



## THE EXPEDITION AGAIN AND THE OPENING OF JAPAN

IN February, 1854, the American fleet again met in Yedo bay. It went the first time with four ships, the second time with nine. The western barbarian had come to get his answer. Instead of stopping at Uruga as he had done the year before, Commodore Perry moved up to Kanagawa, where the city of Yokohama now stands, some twenty-five miles above Uruga and within ten or fifteen miles of Yedo. So powerful a force within an hour's sail of their great metropolis must have expedited the negotiations. And though the American demands were contested inch by inch, yet it was done with good nature and the commissioners almost invariably yielded.

Here enters another actor. As in all historical movements, and certainly in all novels, other influences were at work behind the scenes. It was only another part of the mystery brooding over this strange land that forces unknown and unsuspected should be working for us in the dark. Not till years after did it transpire what a friend we



had in Nakahama Manjiro, a Japanese waif, whose story reads like a romance. In 1838 he was out fishing with two other boys, when their boat was caught in the current, carried out to sea and wrecked on a desolate island. There for half a year they lived a Robinson Crusoe life until picked off by an American whaler and brought to Honolulu. Nakahama learned the language of his new friends, and finally coming to the United States received an education. Another whaling voyage, a visit to the California mines, and he was back in Honolulu anxious to revisit his native land. Nothing could deter him. The dissuasions of his friends, the distance and perils of the way, the likelihood of being beheaded for his pains if he should succeed, — no argument or obstacle could stand for a moment before his unutterable longing for home. In due time therefore Nakahama and his two comrades, now grown from lads to young men of twenty-five, were equipped with a whaleboat, a sack of ship's biscuit, a *Bowditch's Navigator* and a compass, and were put on board an American merchantman bound to Shanghai. A few miles from Lew Chew they and their whaleboat were launched and committed to the waves. After a hard day's pull they reached the shore, but only to be arrested and

imprisoned; and six months later they were forwarded in a trading junk to Japan, to be imprisoned again, this time for three years. It would seem that for three whole years the officials wrestled with the problem before they could decide whether getting blown off the coast in boyhood and being brought back in manhood constituted a capital crime. The year 1853 came round. The Perry Expedition had come and gone, and was to come again. Here was a captive in their dungeons who had actually lived in the country of these western barbarians, spoke their uncouth language and knew their crafty ways. Why behead an expert just when he was needed? Instead they brought him to court and made him open his budget of information. From a prisoner he was transformed into a noble and decorated with the two swords. By order of government he was provided with a crew of carpenters and required to build a whole fleet of whaleboats like his own; and then with a corps of scribes he was directed to translate his *Bowditch's Navigator* and make a score of copies for the use of the Japanese marine. One of these copies Nakahama afterwards gave to his friend chaplain Damon in Honolulu, and it was on exhibition at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. Dr. Damon had often in-

quired after the three adventurers but had never learned their fate. One morning, years after the treaty had been signed, a fine Japanese steamship anchored off Honolulu and her commander came on shore to call on Dr. Damon. It was no other than the long lost Nakahama, now an officer in the Japanese navy. The mutual explanations can be imagined. "Where were you at the time of the expedition?" asked the chaplain. "I was in a room adjoining that in which the negotiations were going on," said Nakahama. "I was not allowed to see or communicate with any of the Americans. But each document from Commodore Perry I translated before it was handed to the commissioners, and the replies also I translated into English before they went to the commodore." Which explains what so mystified our diplomats at the time, that the papers from the "party of the second part" came to them not alone in Dutch and Japanese but in English also. Nakahama was more than interpreter. He knew the American people, the magnitude of their country, their wealth and commerce, their prestige and power. He believed in them. He was the channel through which by a kind of preordination American ideas filtered into Japan. It is easy to recognize a divine preparation of the man, an overruling plan

and purpose in his whole training from the hour when the three castaways drifted to sea in an open boat till the day when the Sunrise Kingdom faced the demands of the American fleet.

Meanwhile the stern public sentiment of this isolated nation was rapidly melting away before our neighborly advances. The people seemed to be glad of our coming. They flocked on board and were received as friends. They admired our ships. They liked our dinners. As an impartial historian I must admit that they took kindly, sometimes convivially, to our brandies and wines. And on shore these courtesies were duly reciprocated. The negotiations took time. Many meetings were held; and on most of these occasions an entertainment was served by the Japanese in native style. Sidney Smith once said of his countrymen that "an Englishman is like an oyster—you must get into him with a knife and fork." That was one of the ways we got into Japan, and many a treat went into that treaty.

At one of these dainty banquets it was my good fortune to be one of the guests. It was the day when the Mikado's gifts to our government were exhibited. They were samples of both the fine arts and the mechanical arts of the country; some of them exquisitely graceful, some showing rather

the ingenuity and skill of plain handicraft. The cabinet lacquer-work especially surpassed in artistic design and beauty of finish anything of the kind we had seen. The other presents were silks, crapes, silverware, bronzes, porcelains, furniture, and samples of household utensils and artisans' tools. For some years after the return of the fleet these gifts could be seen at the Patent Office. I believe they are now exhibited in the National Museum at Washington.

When we had sufficiently admired all the pretty things our genial hosts led us to the banquet room and dinner was set on. This was of course composed of native viands, served in native style, and to be eaten with native chopsticks. To eat in that method requires either long practice or that the applicant be to the manner born. If you are a western barbarian and have not had the advantage of oriental training, do not attempt it, at least when you are hungry; the results are apt to be disappointing. The dinner was abundant. To our Saxon sea-appetites it was toothsome; and what with chopsticks and our own fingers and penknives we wrestled with it in masterly fashion. First they seated us on benches in long rows around the hall and then ranged similar benches before us spread with scarlet tea-cloths. Upon



these in front of each guest was set a small wooden lacquered stand six or eight inches high and twelve or fifteen square, and protected by a rim which kept the dainty dishes from crowding each other off. Mine was filled with the most delicate porcelains, and albeit somewhat hungry I longed to appropriate the ceramics instead of the provender. The menu had its unique points; there were soups, vegetables, oysters, crabs, boiled eggs, pickled fish, seaweed jelly, and a variety of compounds which we did not quite recognize and therefore felt toward them that hesitating awe experienced by the elder Mr. Weller in the presence of "weal pie." The drinks were tea, served as always in the East without alloy of sugar or cream, and *saki*, a strong colorless alcohol distilled from rice, somewhat like the *samshu* or "white wine" of China. To these edibles and potables we applied ourselves with courage, and considering our disabilities with the chopsticks they proved remarkably evanescent. More *saki* and tea prepared us for a dessert of candied nuts, sponge cake, cookies of various genera and species, sugared fruit and confectionery. When all was done our funny hosts brought us each a sheet of bamboo paper to wrap up and carry away what we had not consumed. Some of mine was still extant when I reached home seven months later.



This was a point of etiquette they observed themselves, and it led sometimes to interesting results. One day at a dinner party on board the flagship a Japanese functionary fell in love with a frosted cake and a bottle of hock. According to custom he desired to take them home. But it was late, and his potations having made him too unsteady to be the bearer of any other freight, the commodore promised to send them by a special messenger in the morning. Morning came, but not the cake. During the night that had absconded; some unregenerate tar had stowed it away inside for safe keeping. Here was a terrible dilemma. What if the negotiations should be imperilled for lack of that cake! A sort of coroner's inquest was hastily summoned to sit on the missing loaf. The verdict was, "Send the hock, but tell him that in America we present cake in the evening." The guest was entirely satisfied, and by sunset another frosted cake like the stolen one was concocted at the galley and was duly sent on shore.

After the dinner our hosts conducted us to the beach. Among the presents was a large supply of rice for the fleet. It was put up in straw sacks or bales containing about a hundred and twenty-five pounds each. By the pile stood a company

of athletes and gymnasts chosen from the peasantry for their strength and size, and trained for the service and entertainment of the court. At a signal from their leader, who was himself a giant of muscle and fat, a sort of human Jumbo, they began transporting the rice to the boats. It was more frolic than work. Some of them bore a bale on each hand above their heads, some would carry two laid crosswise on the shoulders and head, while others performed dexterous feats of tossing, catching, balancing them, or turning somersaults with them. I saw one nimble Titan fasten his talons in a sack, throw it down on the sand still keeping his hold, turn a somersault over it, throw it over him as he revolved, and come down sitting on the beach with the sack in his lap. Beat that who can. If you imagine it "as easy as preaching," try it the next time you go into the gymnasium. But let me advise you, first make your will.

Later in the afternoon the same athletes entertained us with a wrestling match. A ring had been prepared in the area of the council-house and the ground softened by the spade. Enter twenty-five performers in a slow and dignified procession, stripped to the loincloth and equipped with satin aprons gorgeously embroidered and fringed. Ranging themselves in a circle around

the ring, with grave pomp they enacted a series of incantations and passes. Then they filed off to the rear and laid aside their satin millinery for business. As their names were called by the master of ceremonies a pair of them would advance, take their stand at opposite points of the ring, crouch on their heels and repeat the mysterious passes. Then entering the circle and warily approaching each other they again crouched, again gesticulated, and finally with a demoniac yell sprang at each other like two monstrous billy-goats. They used the head, not the fist. They plunged into each other, capered wildly about and dove into each other headlong, butted each other on the breast and shoulders with frantic violence. Some of them I noticed had raised large welts on their foreheads by frequent indulgence in this frisky pastime, and some of them were dripping with the blood that oozed from the fat creases of their necks. An hour sufficed for these huge calisthenics. When it was all over and the puffing giants had collapsed, the ring smoked with the dust of battle and looked as if it had been trampled and torn by a herd of gambolling elephants.

Another spectacle that afternoon, more prophetic of the new future just opening on the

empire, was the first railroading in Japan. Among the presents to the Mikado we carried a railroad; not to be sure a fully equipped road, well weighted with mortgage bonds and watered stock, tied up in a merger or run by a receiver; but so much of the genuine article as is represented by the rails, the engine, and a car. In the rear of the council-house the mechanics of the squadron had laid the circular track, and thither our gentle hosts now led us. There stood the locomotive and car, exquisite specimens of American workmanship, the engine already hissing and fuming, impatient to show itself off, the car as sumptuous as the richest woods and the finest art could make it. The whole was constructed on a scale of one quarter size, and so nothing larger than a St. Bernard dog or a French doll could enter the dainty rosewood door. The engineer sat on the tender and bestowed his legs along the engine. And when a timid Japanese was finally induced to take a John Gilpin ride, he had to sit on the roof of the car and stow his feet on the tender. You can imagine with what a death grip he clung to the eaves of the car, and how his teeth chattered and his robes fluttered as he flashed around the circle. He thought he was a dead-head; and so indeed he was. This miniature railroad was

for some years kept as a sort of imperial toy. A storehouse was built for its safe-keeping; and every little while they would relay the track and gay parties of princes and courtiers would go flying around on a sort of circular picnic. The empire has long since outgrown the toy and is laying its own railroads in all directions. Every year witnesses substantial additions to the mileage, the travel and the traffic.

The telegraph seemed to be more of a puzzle to them than the steam engine. We carried them a line fifteen miles long, and set up a short stretch of it as a sample. They would go to one end, deliver a message, and then trot mystified to the other end, only to find their message safely arrived, written out and waiting for them. It was just Yankee magic, necromancy, witchcraft! But they have long since become adepts in the same magic, and their picturesque land is interlacing itself all over with an ever expanding web of wires.

Another of our presents was a brass Dahlgren howitzer. Not long after a thousand pieces like it had been cast at their foundries and were mounted in their forts. It was from these guns that their salutes on Washington's birthday and the fourth of July were appropriately fired.



Washington's name and fame had reached the empire long before the expedition had been dreamed of; "a very great man," they said, "we know him very well in Japan."

After many meetings the negotiations were finally completed and the treaty signed on Friday, the thirty-first day of March, 1854. Our ship had been longest in commission of the whole squadron and was therefore selected to bring the precious document away; and having received the bearer of despatches Captain H. A. Adams, on the fourth of April the *Saratoga* spread her white wings for home. It was inspiring, and to us who were at last homeward bound it was thrilling, to hear the rousing cheers from each ship as we passed down the line, and from the commodore's band the strains of "Home, Sweet Home." We were soon out on the Pacific again, and that was our goodbye to the fleet and to Japan. At Honolulu Captain Adams left us for Panama and reached Washington with the treaty some time in June. The *Saratoga*, wishing in vain for a Panama canal to give her a short cut home, had yet to plough through boundless latitudes and longitudes. Calling at Tahiti we lay for a week within the dreamy shadows of the verdure-clad hills that look down on the harbor of Papiete;



then rolled and pitched and foamed along through the darkness and tempests and cold of Cape Horn, which we passed on the middle day of winter, July fifteenth; and after calling at one port in Brazil, Pernambuco, finally dropped anchor at Charlestown Navy Yard in September, five and a half months from Japan, and absent from America just four years.

All the world knows now to what a splendid outblossoming of new life the national energies of Japan have risen in these later years; and all the world has the right to prognosticate from such an example the kind of regeneration that ought to follow the American arms and the American schoolmaster on Philippine soil. The contrast between the Japan of today and the Japan of half a century ago is little short of miraculous. On the first of January, 1873, the Gregorian calendar was adopted, and since that day the weeks, months and years of Japan are measured like our own. When we entered Yedo bay there was nothing to mark the channel or warn us of hidden rocks, and we had to grope our way in with lead and line; but since 1869 every dangerous headland and reef has been guarded by a lighthouse or a buoy. When the first Japanese embassy visited America its advent

was heralded by the native steamer *Kanda maru*, which came to San Francisco navigated indeed by one of our naval officers, but manned by a Japanese crew, run by Japanese engineers, and sailed by a Japanese commander, who was none other than our friend Nakahama Manjiro. But the native cleverness and skill have easily mastered the new conditions; and now the country is pushing her commerce in every direction, and holding international expositions to attract foreign trade. She is filling her bounds with railroads, telegraphs, electrics, steamers, factories, power plants, post offices, hospitals, and banks. She looks at herself every morning in a myriad daily newspapers. She is beginning — alas for her own picturesque grace — to array herself in western garb. Among other luxuries she has a finely growing and very promising national debt.

To place her regeneration on a permanent basis the government has established a Bureau of Education, partitioned the empire into districts for schools and colleges, and crowned the whole system with the University of Tokio. Many of the more advanced pupils have been sent abroad to be trained in the institutions and methods of the western world. Among these wide awake young students have been members of the nobility

and sons of the daimios, even a brother and an uncle of the emperor. The emperor is a lineal descendant of the first historical ruler of Japan, whose date lies back more than twenty-five hundred years. He is said to be the one hundred and twenty-third sovereign in the direct line of succession. Both he and his empress have grandly improved upon the traditions of such a venerable antiquity. One may hazard the statement that no country in the world has ever passed through such a transformation within the lifetime of a single ruler. The present Mikado—to borrow the language of one of our American authors who has spent many years in Japan, and knows from the inside the whole history of the great achievement—“has abolished the feudal system, emancipated four-fifths of his subjects from feudal vassalage and made them possessors of the soil; disarmed a feudal soldiery numbering probably six hundred thousand men trained to arms, reorganized the order of society, established and equipped an army forty thousand strong and a navy superior in ships and equipments to that of the United States;”<sup>1</sup> an army since increased to hundreds of thousands, which has driven the Russian Bear out of Manchuria; a navy which dispersed the fleets

<sup>1</sup> Written in 1887. Griffis, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, p. 423.

of China in the memorable action off the Yalu river in 1895, and now ten years later by its finer strategy and better marksmanship has annihilated two powerful Russian squadrons. Captain Brinkley puts the contrast in still further detail. "When an American squadron arrived to break down her isolation, she did not possess even the beginnings of a national fleet or a national army; of an ocean-going mercantile marine; of a telegraphic or postal system; of a newspaper press; of enlightened codes, of a trained judiciary, or of properly organized tribunals of justice; she knew nothing of occidental sciences and philosophies; was a complete stranger to international law and to the usages of diplomacy; had no conception of parliamentary institutions or popular representation, and was divided into a number of feudal principalities, each virtually independent of the other, and all alike untutored in the spirit of nationality or imperialism. In thirty years these conditions were absolutely metamorphosed. Feudalism had been abolished; the whole country united under one administration; the polity of the state placed on a constitutional basis; the people admitted to a share in the government under representative institutions; an absorbing sentiment of patriotism substituted for the narrow local

loyalties of rival fiefs; the country intersected with telegraphs and railways, and its remotest districts brought within the circuit of an excellent postal system; the flag of the nation carried to distant countries by a large mercantile marine; a powerful fleet organized, manned by expert seamen, and proved to be as capable of fighting scientifically as of navigating the high seas with marked immunity from mishap; the method of conscription applied to raising a large military force provided with the best modern weapons and trained according to western tactics; the laws recast on the most advanced principles of occidental jurisprudence and embodied in exhaustive codes; provision made for the administration of justice by well-equipped tribunals and an educated judiciary; an extensive system of national education inaugurated, with universities turning out students capable of original research in the sciences and philosophies of the west; the state represented at foreign courts by competent diplomatists; the people supplied with an ample number of journals and periodicals; the foundations of a great manufacturing career laid, and the respect of foreign powers unreservedly won. Such a record may well excite wonder.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Captain F. Brinkley, *Japan, its History, Arts and Literature*.

Vol. I : pp. 9-11.



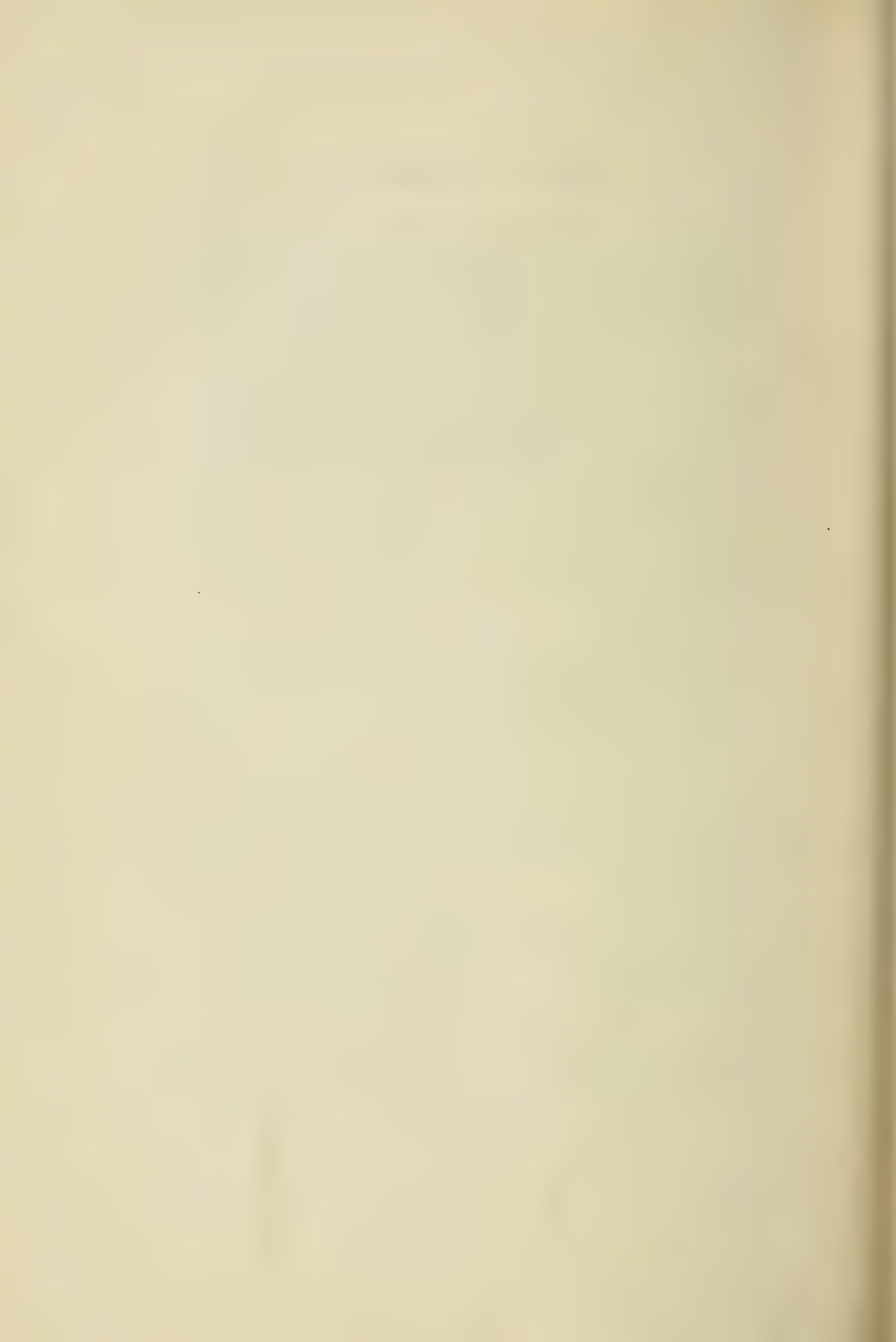
The first parliament assembled in 1890; and it is a significant fact that some of its members were Christian men elected by non-Christian constituencies. The famous edict against Christianity, after standing upon the statute books for more than two centuries was repealed in 1873. Christian missions are actively engaged in laying the foundations of an evangelized empire. And though the swift intelligence of the people, their remarkable aptitude for absorbing western ideas, and their instinctive *penchant* for a materialistic philosophy have led many of them into strange vagaries of opinion, and the faithful missionaries and native pastors have met with some severe discouragements, yet the great current of Christian civilization is steadily sweeping over the whole broad land. The first Protestant convert to Christianity is said to have been a government official who picked up a New Testament floating in the bay; and ever since that day the kindly oceans have been wafting to the shores of the Sunrise Kingdom from all Christian lands the messengers of the Cross and the glad tidings of the Christian gospel. The first missionaries landed in 1859, five years after the treaty; and now nearly a thousand are living and laboring in different parts of the empire. A vast and rapidly increas-



ing Christian literature has arisen, oftentimes decorated and beautified for its mission by Japanese art itself. Churches have been gathered, and many of them have native pastors well educated in their own colleges and professional schools. Many of these churches are not only self-supporting but already engaged in broad philanthropic service for others. Young Men's Christian Associations, King's Daughters, Chautauqua circles, Christian Endeavor societies, industrial schools and other varieties of organized benevolence vie with each other in broadening and deepening the intellectual and spiritual life of the empire. On the very spot where guns were cast to resist Commodore Perry's fleet "now stands the Imperial Female Normal College;" and on the grounds at Yokohama where the treaty was signed now "rises the spire of a Christian church."<sup>1</sup> Some of our first missionaries in Japan lived in Buddhist temples rented to them by the priests, who to give them accommodation moved out, idols and all. A happy omen of the spiritual transformations which are cleansing those shrines and filling them with Christianity—taking out the idols and putting in the Cross. The morning sun is pouring its radiance over the hills

<sup>1</sup> Griffis, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*. pp. 325, 357.

and valleys of that beautiful land. The great island kingdom of the Orient is even now in the golden dawn of her renewal; and now more than ever, in her physical beauty, her material expansion, her spiritual quickening, and the high place among the nations which she has won by her arms and her generous diplomacy, deserves to wear the diadem of her ancient title, the Empire of the Rising Sun.



X

A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY BACK-  
WARDS



## A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY BACK- WARDS

I CANNOT assume that the ingredients of this chapter ever actually appeared in the log-book of the captain's clerk. But having since grown out of studies initiated by the experiences therein described, they will serve as a suitable peroration to this record, or, if you prefer, as a seasonable *coup de grâce*.

To the visitor in China the first view gives an impression of civilization which grows stronger with every week of his stay. The coasters that swarm about the islands and capes as he approaches do not betoken a savage state; they are the messengers of commerce, the bearers of wealth, the servitors of luxury; and they are manned not by barbarians but by men of industry and enterprise. On shore he finds himself within an empire more extensive than was ever the Persian or the Assyrian, more populous than the Roman in its golden age, perhaps as old as the Egyptian and far more enduring. He finds it a great country, big and bustling, with cities, temples, bridges, roads, ca-



nals; a country with a history and a literature, with libraries, schools, theaters, with paper mills and printing shops, with government, soldiers, nobility and taxes, with agriculture, manufactures, commerce, music and art, with minted coin and even paper money; and capping the climax the oldest newspaper in the world. All these are venerable with age, and some of them he finds emerging from an antiquity that had passed into history before Greece was yet in a state of protoplasm. He is forced to admit that this looks like civilization. It may not be his kind, but it is civilization. These people may be fossils, but they are not savages. Their Central Flowery Kingdom, within which they have tried to barricade themselves against the world, is opinionated and fanatical, and yet embodies in itself the political philosophy, the social ethics and the mechanical industries of more than a hundred generations. This is not barbarism. It is society. It is civilization. The ingredients have been queer, and they have produced a queer result. But it is not a case of "arrested development." It is a true civilization, and in an advanced stage. And the wonder of it is that it grew up in a country separated from outside influences, walled in by ocean, desert and mountain range, and among a people

who down to the nineteenth century were but twice conquered by any foreign power,<sup>1</sup> and then not till ages after their nation had become mature, compacted and permanent. So far from being assisted in their evolution by the religion and culture of the West, these Orientals had never heard of the Christian faith, or of the Roman eagles, or of Grecian art, or of Phœnician commerce, until their own national life could be measured by twenty centuries. A French author affirms that "of all the peoples who have existed or who still exist on the globe, the Chinese are the only people, except the Indian, whose civilization from the time when the earth began to be peopled has accomplished its complete development of its own movement and by its own nature, without the help of any foreign civilization brought in by conquest or transmitted by literary monuments, as have been the European civilizations, and perhaps even that of ancient Egypt."<sup>2</sup> He does not allow that the advent of Buddhism from India was a civilizing agency, since China was already in advance of any influence which might otherwise have been exerted by that. Here we have an indigenous civilization. Its processes have not been tampered

<sup>1</sup> Genghis Khan in 1235—the Manchus in 1644.

<sup>2</sup> Pauthier, *Chine, ou Descrip. Historique, &c.*, p. 5.

with by any meddlesome hand. They were spontaneous and *sui generis*. A country which has thus worked out its own problems in its own way and apart from all others must have had some interesting experiences. And this chapter shall give it a chance to tell its story.

History is not a crab, and does not indulge in the habit of walking backward. It seems hardly courteous to invite her to do so. When a venerable empire in her progress down the centuries has gathered from each some token, some invention, some utility or convenience, it is not nice to make her turn about and retrace her steps to the starting point, and all along the way lay aside piece by piece one art after another, one bit of invention or discovery after another, one custom or appliance or craft or tool after another, redepositing in each cycle the gains she had gathered, until back in the twilight primeval she stands in her original barbaric simplicity, stripped of all the comforts and conveniences of the later civilization. And all for our delectation; that we luxurious moderns may inspect her slow and painful development, and be able to see for ourselves just where and when and how she picked up those odds and ends of civic life out of which she has slowly builded her oriental state. It is a good

deal to ask. By way of justification we can remind the ancient dame of her own method of teaching her boys at school — who, when they bring their lessons to the master turn their backs to him, and recite their task from memory, and thus “back” their way through all the classics of their mother tongue. In this chapter we will back our way through Chinese history.

In countermarching from this twentieth century toward the beginnings of things we shall finally reach a period where only the rudiments of the social fabric will be left; life reduced to its simplest terms. And still beyond lies a region of myth whence issue only the echoes of tradition, and whose denizens, shrouded in primeval twilight, appear rather as specters roving among the shadows of the dawn than as beings of flesh and blood who could have had anything in common with the man of today. In trying to span the enormous space which divides us from these distant shades we shall find it convenient to do so by periods. Let us fix our milestones say a millenium apart; for if it is possible to go back in time at all, it will be quite as easy to take a millennium at a single bound.

Planting our first guidon in the year 1000 A. D. and starting on our journey thither we shall

speedily begin to miss multitudes of conveniences which had become familiar objects in the China of today. As we recede we leave behind all those modern arts and appliances which have come from intercourse with western powers in our own times, and which cling mainly to the shores of the great empire without penetrating very far inland or exerting any sensible influence on the mass of the people. Many branches of mechanical industry have sprung up in our own generation, and their success is ample evidence that the Celestial is not the utterly servile and imitative being we had been given to understand. The first things to disappear would naturally be the modern Chinese navy, her fleets of commercial steamships, the European arms and tactics in some divisions of her army, her modern arsenals and munitions, her steam cotton factories, and her nascent railroads and telegraphs. Following these we should presently lose the arts of modern glass blowing and bronze work, the preparation of vermilion and prussian blue, the modern newspaper, the manufacture of gold leaf, pearl buttons, glass mirrors, clocks, watches, fire engines, the use of such conveniences as the capstan and windlass, and the improvement in mathematical instruments, field artillery, copper block printing and the like,



introduced in the seventeenth century by the Jesuit missionaries. Opium will be gone, with a good riddance; for though long known and used as a medical nostrum — said to have been first brought into China by the Arabs in the latter part of the thirteenth century — it is only within the last one hundred and fifty years that it has been working such havoc as a narcotic poison. As we go on the people will begin to look strangely abnormal, or rather normal, for they will be wearing the hair nature gave them instead of shaving the head and cultivating a queue — a mark of subjection imposed by the Manchus after the conquest in 1644. We shall miss the courtly columns of the *Pekin Gazette*, the oldest newspaper in the world; and must be content to continue our journey without the solace of either fiction or drama, which appeared in China somewhat suddenly and nearly together about the thirteenth century. Paper money will still be a convenience to us, for that has been in use at various times for nearly a thousand years. We shall in due time emerge on the other side of the barbaric court of Genghis Khan, the Mongol conqueror of China; and of his still more famous grandson Kublai Khan, who has been called "the most civilized prince of his time," whose capital was



visited by the Italian adventurer, Marco Polo, and under whose rule the nation grew prosperous and powerful. The Grand Canal, of which he was the builder, will disappear, and his whole vast power, then at its greatest extent, will melt from view "like the baseless fabric of a vision"; as indeed it did less than a century after the death of the great khan.

On completing this first stadium of our journey and looking around upon the country and the times, we find the same industrious people, the same busy toil of rice and tea culture in the fields, the same pottering traffic in the towns, the same plodding commerce on the rivers and along the coast. In Europe at that date the wheels of civilization drove somewhat heavily. Our Saxon fathers in England still after a fashion held their own, not yet conquered by Canute and his Danes. William the Norman was not yet in his cradle. The ravaging Norsemen had stolen that slice of Northern France which has ever since borne their name, but had not yet invaded England, nor set up their kingdom of Sicily. The Saracens were occupying Western Asia, Northern Africa and Spain. The Turks had not yet appeared before the walls of Constantinople. The Crusades had not begun. The soil of Europe was blanketed

with feudalism. The times were still dark. But the people were slowly emerging, and were gradually improving in those mechanical arts with which they were to build a better civilization. Christianity was doing what it could to regenerate society, but was itself too often borne back in the struggles of those turbulent times. In China the conditions were quite different. It was a pagan civilization, but it had entered upon its period of maturity. The empire already sustained an immense population; and by the discipline of its own internal feuds and wars with outside assailants had become compacted into a solid state. Letters were cultivated by high and low. There was a large literature of block-printed books. Schools existed in every town for teaching the poor, and the masters were paid at the public charge. Government officials were selected from the literary graduates, and that had been the rule for four or five centuries. There were no post offices, but the emperors sent written mandates to the provincial kings and governors by relays of post horses. The people were skilled in porcelain, in lacquered ware, in silk-weaving. Cotton, which had been known for two or three centuries before the Christian era as a garden plant, and the cloth woven from it as a rare and

costly fabric, was now beginning to be cultivated for general use. Among the craftsmen were expert carvers and even artists. People lived in houses of wood or brick or even stone; their rooms were adorned with ancestral tablets, mottoes from Confucius, and household shrines where they worshiped idols and the shades of their ancestors. They had dials to measure time, and the two Mohammedan travelers<sup>1</sup> who visited them two centuries before report that they found clocks run by weights. There was copper coin in abundance, but no money of silver or gold. The women dressed their hair with ivory combs. The people were not addicted to wine, and the ravages of opium and *samshu* were unknown. Tea was the common drink; the plant had been cultivated for many centuries. The two Arabian travelers give us the first news we have of it from any foreigner, and their quaint notice is worth quoting: "The Emperor also reserves to himself the revenues which arise from the salt mines, and from a certain herb which they drink with hot water, and of which great quantities are sold in all the cities to the amount of great sums. They call it *Sah*, and it is a shrub more bushy than the pomegranate tree and of a more taking smell,

<sup>1</sup> Their *Ancient Account* was translated from the Arabic by Renaudot.

but it has a kind of bitterness with it. Their way is to boil water, which they pour upon this leaf, and this drink cures all sorts of diseases."<sup>1</sup> The people married as many wives as they pleased, and were fond of gaming and all manner of diversions. Their scholars cultivated astronomy, but attained to little real knowledge of the stars, and still less of other sciences. The nation was peaceable, though able to fight on occasion; and had an army, equipped with bows, spears, swords and shields. Gunpowder was already in existence, but was used in fireworks, sometimes by way of entertainment, sometimes to scare off evil spirits; its use for slaughter on the field of battle did not dawn on their innocent minds till about the twelfth century.<sup>2</sup> The Chinese drew most of their living from the soil then as now, and used hoes, spades, shovels, mattocks, plows and harrows. They irrigated their fields, and had water wheels for the purpose, with other devices of a cruder sort. All these implements were somewhat rudimentary, in much the same primitive shape in which they had been originally contrived.

These data will help our modern imagination to picture the great empire as it stood in the year

<sup>1</sup> *Ancient Account*, Renaudot, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> S. Wells Williams, *The Middle Kingdom*, II: p. 90.

of our Lord one thousand. Its inhabitants were evidently less enlightened than now. They had not yet come to the enjoyment of so many of the arts and comforts of life. Yet they were a civilized people. A country besprinkled with cities, towns, plantations, markets, schools, libraries and temples, interlaced with innumerable lines of commerce and trade, ruled by a fully organized government, and professing for their ethical ideals in business and social life the maxims of their great sage Confucius, such a country had surely reached a well-defined stage of civilization.

Measuring off another millennium in our recession through Chinese history will set our next milestone at the beginning of the Christian era. The reigning house is the great Han dynasty from which to this day the Chinese love to call themselves the sons of Han. The occupant of the imperial throne is Ping-ti — "the Emperor Peace;" a strange coincidence often noticed, that this should be the title of the monarch of the great oriental kingdom when on the other shore of Asia He who was born Prince of Peace was lying in the manger at Bethlehem. This distant date is still but a mediæval period for so ancient a realm; and when we reach it we shall find Chinese society of nineteen hundred years ago more rudimental

and less homogeneous. The pacific title which stands at its head apparently had small influence over the actual flow of events. The whole period is strongly marked with political convulsions. There are frequent changes of dynasty; and in each many of the aspirants attain to the throne only by lavish use of dagger and poison. During almost the whole of this turbulent millennium Chinese history bears a close resemblance to the bloody annals of the later Roman empire. While such monsters as Commodus, Caracalla and Heliogabalus were rioting in debauchery, unknown to them and alike unconscious of them, such other monsters as Tung-cho, Fe-te, Lew-yu were rivaling their unnatural crimes in the east. The physical world too seemed disposed to emulate the malign activities of man. There were earthquakes, furious and fatal. Droughts were followed by famines. Once an entire population of a hundred thousand families migrated in quest of a more kindly soil. The rivers, neglected by the monarchs, who were busy with their courtesans and their feuds, took the opportunity now and then to burst their dykes and sweep off whole communities and almost whole provinces at a time. And yet in all the hurly-burly, and under the incubus of such atrocious misrule, there was a vitality in



Chinese civilization that made it grow, and made its growth substantial and permanent. This was the period that introduced the culture of tea, the manufacture of porcelain, the genesis of gunpowder, improvements in glass-making, the use of India ink for writing, and the invention of block printing. This period witnessed a radical civil service reform in limiting to literary graduates the selection of officials for governmental employ, and adopted various improvements in the conduct of affairs municipal and provincial, and even in the imperial administration itself. It was in this period that the nation fought off the Huns and bought off the Turks, and grew into such prosperity and renown that overtures of friendship and trade came from Arabia and Hindostan, and later from Persia and Rome. In the first century China welcomed the religion of Buddha; in the seventh a Nestorian priest brought the gospel of Christ. Within this millennial term occurred three general epochs of reformation and revival of learning; under Ming-ti in the first century, Leung-wu-ti in the sixth, Heuen-tsung in the eighth. Other less extensive movements in the same direction are noted by the native historians. Schools and colleges were established, libraries were gathered, learned men were encouraged, and

literary degrees became the passport to promotion.

In such facts as these we have the picture of a nation learning to think for itself, becoming conscious of its needs, and beginning to put forth its inventive powers to supply them. It was already a large empire. The present provinces of Kwangtung, Kwangsi and Fuhkien had lately submitted to the imperial sceptre—a region of more than two hundred and eleven thousand square miles—almost exactly the size of modern Germany; and with these additions the national boundaries had expanded to very nearly their present limits. At the beginning of the Christian era the Chinese monarch received homage and tribute from a territory that stretched from the Pacific to the Caspian. It is impossible now to compute the population which occupied these vast plains. The more fertile sections naturally swarmed with life, while some of the rougher and more forbidding tracts were scarcely inhabited at all. On the boundless interior steppes the subject races wandered at will; but in China proper, from the Kiayu pass to the Yellow sea, there was nothing nomadic or predatory, save some fragmentary tribes who to this day linger among the mountains of the southwest. The Chinese were even then a nation. They had a central government, laws, literature, cities and

trade. They cultivated rice, made silk, coined copper money. They had foundries for casting tripods and bells. The mass of the people were of course of menial occupation, and were ignorant and poor. Very few could read. Books were scarce and costly, as in the Saxon times under King Alfred and for the same reason. The mechanical arts were rude. In the common handicrafts the simple contrivances which had come down from a still remoter antiquity could hardly be dignified with the name of machinery. The houses people lived in were decent, and the villages made some pretensions to respectability; yet Canton, then as now the queen city of southern China, was walled around with a stockade of bamboo and mud.

A glance at the west will show us the familiar names and events which stand on the same parallel with the period we have reached. It is the Augustan age of Rome. Seated on the throne of the world she has pushed her boundaries outward in all directions. The well known legions have broken the power of Carthage and have reduced to vassalage Syria, Macedonia and Greece. Alexandria is the centre of commerce and learning. The great men of Sparta and Athens are in their graves. The last prophet of the Old Testament has uttered his warnings, and the Maccabees after bravely

struggling to maintain the national prestige have vanished from the stage. In the west the Teutonic tribes have swarmed from their jungles and swept down upon the more civilized people of the plains, and the long and bloody struggle has ended in Cæsar's conquest of Germany, Gaul and Britain. The homes of our Saxon ancestors were still in the Schleswig forests, and the British Celts had only just learned to bow to the inevitable Roman. The world was witnessing the progress of two types of pagan civilization, the Latin and the Greek; while unknown to both a third type, the industrial, was slowly working out its problems in China, and has outlived them both.

These in brief were the conditions east and west about the beginning of the Christian era. Measuring back from that point, the next period will reach to 1000 B. C. This is the time of Solomon the great king in Jerusalem, perhaps of Zoroaster the great reformer in Persia. The Phœnicians, the energetic Yankees of the Mediterranean, have built up their luxurious metropolitan seaport Tyre, and forth from it are launching their argosies of commerce and colonies of settlers to every accessible coast. Babylon, though declining from its former splendor, is still a powerful state. Its neighbor, Assyria, warlike and cruel, has spread

its arms and its boundaries over a large part of western Asia. The Hittites, their rivals, a more civilized people than either Assyria or Babylon, are yet powerful enough to hold their own for centuries in presence of both. And Egypt, the oldest of them all, has passed its golden age and is already far gone in decay. Rome will have to wait for yet a couple of centuries and more before its twin founders are suckled by the she-wolf. Greece too is still in the shell; the Hellenic tribes doubtless there, but as yet no nation, no state, no poetry and art, no drama, her famous temples not built, her sages still unborn, the blind bard not yet awake to sing the adventures of Ulysses and the fall of Troy.

In Chinese history this was a great millennium. In its centre stands Confucius, the one illustrious name that has dominated China for more than two thousand years. By his side appears an elder sage, Lao-tse, fifty years old when Confucius was in his cradle, a man whose speculations have grown into the system we know as Taoism, a philosophy thoroughly unphilosophical, and a religion thoroughly irreligious — probably as unintelligible now to his own countrymen as to the rest of us. In this era too lived and reigned the lordly Che-hwang-ti, brilliant and unscrupulous,



often called the Napoleon of China. He was the builder of the Great Wall, the projector of roads, palaces, fortresses, canals, and withal a great political reformer; more famous perhaps for his monstrous attempt to destroy the literature which had accumulated in China before his day; some say in order to immortalize himself and stand in history as the First Ruler of the great empire; others, and with more reason, say that he aimed to demolish the dead and dried-up ideals of the past and force his people to form new habits of looking forward instead of backward. This period can show great deeds as well as great names. One was the crude beginning of printing; so big a thing indeed that it seems to have required at least two eras of discovery — the original contrivance, and then a thousand years later finding out its inestimable utilities. The books of the ancients had been traced with a style on leaves or reeds or slips of bamboo, but more recently had been engrossed on cloth or silk. It was in the latter part of this period that paper came into being and at once swept everything before it, remanding all other devices to the oblivion of the past. It was this period which settled the form of the Chinese letters, and produced the first dictionary of them. It was this period that gathered the first library



and compiled the first lexicon of the language, said to be the most ancient universal lexicon in any tongue. This was the period of the Chinese Herodotus, Sze-ma-tseen, in whom the national history began to assume its proper rank in literature. Almost the entire period was covered by the Chau dynasty. Thirty-five emperors held the imperial sceptre two centuries longer than any other reigning family. Under this dynasty the evils of the ancient feudal system culminated; and the next reigning house vainly attempted to consolidate the empire by destroying the power of the petty princes and reducing by force the provinces which would not yield to reason or gold—a savory enterprise which was completed later by the Hans. This was therefore a critical period in the early life of the nation; and we have in it an interesting spectacle of a great people emerging from the feudal chrysalis state into the higher and more homogeneous monarchical form.

Throughout nearly the whole of this period the Chinese had copper coin. Very early in it they made silk—probably even before. They knew the properties of the arch long before the Romans or the Greeks. According to Du Halde they were the first of all people to use iron in their bridges. The loadstone was known to them from a remote

antiquity, and its power of affecting iron is noted in a Chinese dictionary as early as A. D. 121. In a work written a hundred years later Péré Gaubil says he found the use of the compass distinctly recorded. There is even a story that eleven centuries before the Christian era the emperor Ching-wang presented certain ambassadors with chariots fitted with box-compasses to direct their homeward way. The artisans of the empire made pottery, bells, tripods, vases of silver and gold, weapons for the troops, and the simple utensils required by the farmer and the fisherman. They were mainly an agricultural people; and the two great river deltas and the vast swampy plains of the interior fed the increasing millions with the already national diet of rice.

In many ways the conditions prevailing at the beginning and at the end of this period, with a whole millennium between, present us with a notable contrast. We have seen what the people were under the Han. To picture them as they were a thousand years before we must divest them of much that made the times of Han their Age of Chivalry. First of all we must conceive of the Chinese without Confucius; an almost impossible thing, since the name and fame and teachings of the sage are for more than two thousand years so

interwoven with the life of the nation, its history, its politics, its philosophy and religion, that the very best part of Chinese civilization may fairly be ascribed to him. Think of China without Confucius; without his writings, without his pupils and commentators, without his influence, without a tablet to his memory or a temple for his worship. Think of China without Taoism or Buddhism; without printing or paper; without porcelain or lacquer ware, or tea; without compass or gunpowder or coin, possibly without silk; without her Great Wall and her Grand Canal. It is not easy to imagine China so stripped. What can be left? There was left a people not nomadic, but nationalized and settled; a people of some millions — how many no one knows; a people segregated into provinces and ruled by hereditary princes who held some sort of feudal relation with each other and with the central court; a people who lived in houses, and decorated them with mottoes from their ancient sages, and with metal vases some of which are still in existence and are greatly admired; a people who knew something of the common handicrafts, carpentry, metallurgy, husbandry; who had no coin, but traded by barter; who indulged in war and fought with bows and swords; a people whose men of letters

recorded their learning on strips of bamboo, whose astrologers kept account of eclipses and other formidable freaks of nature, whose poets still live in the grave lyrics afterwards embalmed by Confucius in the *Shi-king*, whose chroniclers left their annals to be gathered into the *Shu-king* by the same pious hand.

These were the beginnings of civilization. They are not the beginnings of the nation. To reach that distant goal we have a goodly journey before us yet. Another millennium backwards will set us down at 2000 B. C. This is about midway in the Hsia dynasty which was founded by Yu the great and lasted for nearly four centuries and a half; a period generally reckoned by Chinese historians as the first that can be called properly historic. At this ancient date the country does not throng with such hordes of people as we have found in later periods. Yet there was a wonderful vitality and fertility about them. In spite of war and famine and flood, according to their oldest maps they had already spread enough to occupy, or at least to hold, a territory stretching seventeen degrees from north to south and twenty-five from east to west. Their employments and their belongings were of the simplest kind. According to the native chroniclers the property of Shun

when he succeeded the emperor Yao B. C. 2238, consisted of cattle, bow, shield, spear, some household furnishings and musical instruments; among the furnishings may be allowed some clay ware for the kitchen, since he was himself a potter, as well as fisherman and farmer. The people were still engaged, as they had been for some centuries, in clearing the jungle, draining the marshes and reducing the land to cultivation. They made pottery, and soon acquired some practical knowledge of metals, as is shown very interestingly by specimens which have survived to our own time. There is an ancient Chinese work, the Po-ku-tu, in sixteen large volumes, descriptive of sacred vases, jugs, bottles and mirrors, of gold, silver and copper, of the Shang, Chau and Han dynasties, covering some eighteen centuries and coming down to the Christian era. It contains several hundred plates of them. Some of the vases described are still extant, nearly four thousand years old. Several figures of them are given in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, and show considerable art and skill. At the beginning of this period the Chinese already possessed a rude alphabet; E Yin presented to his sovereign a written memorial in the year 1765 B. C.; solar eclipses were recorded as early as four centuries before.



These figures do not take us back to the origin of this ancient people. We shall get nearer to our quest if we lay out another millennium and put down our next stake at 3000 B. C. Here we must do much of our traveling in the dark. It is the period of the Five Emperors, a legendary and mythical region. Yet the accounts seem to wear an air of credibility as far up as Fuh-hi, the first of the famous Five. The date assigned to him is B. C. 2852. We may discount the extravagant claims of the Chinese for the full-blown glory of this monarch, and make due allowance for their somewhat nebulous proofs of the antiquity of their institutions, and yet there would seem to be a residuum of grounds for believing in Fuh-hi. The mythical period of China stretches back into a darkness which we have no means of exploring. But Fuh-hi seems to half emerge in an early dawn where night has begun to melt into a semi-darkness in which as we strain our eyes we can discern an actual living figure moving to and fro in the gloom. We cannot well refuse to believe that by his time, more likely some centuries before, the forbears of the Chinese had arrived on the banks of the Hoang-ho and were actual settlers. The first provinces occupied were not on the coast but in the interior. Fuh-hi's capital was in Shensi, a



territory on the western bank of the great river and more than seven hundred miles from the sea. The migrating tribes had entered what was to be China from the west; and the legends of that earliest reign exhibit them as already passing from the nomadic to the provincial. Ignorant of the vast expanse into which they had emerged through the passes of the Thien-shan, they spread gradually down along the banks of the Yellow river, halting here and there as they lighted upon favorable spots for putting up their huts and grazing their flocks. They found themselves in a country battlemented around on three sides with a rampart of mountain ranges, and on the fourth defended by the sea. It was a territory of immense alluvial plains, crossed by straggling ridges of limestone and granite, and channeled by numberless rivers. The inundations of these untamed floods reduced vast regions of soil to swamp. Possibly the immense "fault" which, according to Professor Pumpelly,<sup>1</sup> produced the ancient lake system of northern China, may have been at the time of the Chinese immigration a recent event; and the tremendous deluge which native tradition locates at a period as early as thirty-one centuries

<sup>1</sup> Described and mapped in his *Geological Researches in China, Mongolia and Japan*, pp. 43-45.

before the Christian era, may have been the first rough experience the tribes encountered on their arrival. At any rate this much is true, that the possession of her magnificent rivers has entailed upon China more frequent, more extensive, and more destructive inundations than are known in any other country. The very watercourse along which the earliest migrants picked their way has long borne the tragic title of "China's Sorrow." The traditions are full of tokens that the first settlers found large tracts overflowed, and were obliged to resort to lake dwellings raised on piles above the floods, or to cave dwellings tunneled into the cliffs of clay or limestone that skirted the ravines. In the remote parts of the northwestern provinces and in Mongolia it is said that such caves are occupied to this day.

In point of civilization these early tribes who became the founders of ancient Cathay were scarcely more like their modern descendants than the cannibal Celt was like the modern highlander, or the barbarous Saxon like the modern Englishman. What we know of them is gathered from the traditions preserved by the native historians. They were a black-haired race, similar in size and build to the Celestial of our time. When they arrived they found other savages in occupancy,

straggling to and fro through the forests and over the mountain ranges in search of food. These aborigines they soon dispossessed, absorbing them or chasing them off the territory. Some of the remnants are extant to this day, and under the name of the Meaou-tze still occupy the mountains of the southwest, hereditary foes of the Chinese, yet occasionally seen in the markets of Canton. Du Halde, drawing from native sources, paints a picture of these primitive times which is not prepossessing: "Men differed but little from brutes; they knew their mother, but not their father; the sexes lived in common; they fed mainly on animals taken in the snare or the chase, devouring every part and drinking the blood and wearing the skin; they had no letters, and kept their records with knotted cords." Yet these untamed barbarians brought with them, whencesoever derived, a dim knowledge of the true God; a knowledge which with the unrolling centuries was to act as one of the mighty impulses that would lift them out of savagery into civilization. Another witness fills in the details with equal vigor.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Père Mailla was a Jesuit missionary in China. Barrow gives this account of his *History* from which we can form some opinion of its value: "We may take for granted that when the Emperor Kaung-hee (1662—1723) summoned to Peking the most learned men of the empire for the purpose of translating into the Mantchoo language an abridged history of China from the earliest times, those annals only were consulted which were considered as most authentic, namely, those which are compiled and published by the

" Les premieres peuples qui habitèrent la Chine, n'en occupèrent d'abord que le partie septentrionale, qui consiste dans ce que renferme aujourd'hui la province de Chen-si; ils étoient si grossieres et si barbares qu' ils tenoient beaucoup plus de la bête que de l'homme: sans maisons ni chaumières, les bois et les campagnes étoient leurs demeures ordinaires; ils ne vivoient que des fruits que leur fournissoit la terre, ou de la chair crue des animaux qu'ils tuoient, dont ils n'avoient pas horreur de boire le sang, et ils se garantissoient de la froidure en se revêtant de leur peau, sans d'autre apprêt que celui de la nature. Nulle loi pour leur conduite, nulle règle, nulle discipline; chacun suivoit les mouvemens que sa passion lui inspiroit, et ne paroissoit penser qu'à la vie purement animale; enfin, ils ne différoient de la brute qu'en ce qu'ils avoient une ame capable de leur inspirer de l'aversion pour une telle vie."

It appears then that the Chinese locate their

college of Han-lin. Père Mailla was one of those missionaries who viewed the Chinese less through the eye of prejudice than most of the Jesuits. He was employed by the emperor in making a survey of the empire which cost him and his colleagues the labor of ten years; he passed forty-five years of his life in the country, and generally about the court, during which time he made himself perfectly acquainted with the Mantchoo and the Chinese languages. When therefore Kaung-hee undertook the laudable design of giving to his Mantchoo subjects an authenticated history of China in their own language, Père Mailla conceived the idea of proceeding *pari passu* with a translation of the same work into French; and having lived to complete this Herculean labor, it was published at Paris after many difficulties and delays by the Abbé Grozier, in fourteen large quarto volumes, under the title of *Histoire Generale de la Chine.*" The quotation in the text is taken from the first chapter of this work.

own beginnings on the lowest levels of humanity. They admit the savage conditions in which their progenitors groped their way into the field of the future empire. No trace of civilization here; the only hope for it is contained in the significant fact noted by the Jesuit — "the mind capable of feeling disgust for such a life," and capable therefore of attempting to improve it; an impulse due in part to the obscure promptings of that religious knowledge of which I have just spoken, and in part to the wretched conditions which came to be so unbearable. Whatever the motive that urged these wanderers forward — the passion for vagrancy, the love of adventure, the quest of food, the thirst for conquest, the pressure of populations in the rear — the horde swept on down the valleys, and found themselves tenants of a boundless domain. To make it habitable they must needs clear the jungles and drain the swamps. They set themselves to the task, and out of that task came the Central Flowery Kingdom. Their civilization was born of their work. The clearing of the jungle diminished the supply of wild beasts for food, and agriculture became a double necessity. Agriculture needed a tool, if nothing more than a pointed stick. The pointed stick could only be fashioned by fire or with an edge of flint. The flint knife



required a stone hammer and some degree of skill. This was a pitch of practical sense to which they must have attained in their nomadic life; for even then the stone implements must have been needed to shape the weapons with which they fought their battles and killed their game. The cultivation of the soil would become a civilizing influence in more ways than one; it was a new employment and therefore a new application of handicraft, and unlike hunting it was itself a thing of growth, requiring more tools, harder labor and quicker processes to satisfy the wants of an increasing population. We can easily imagine therefore how the pointed stick would in course of time get itself improved into a rude pick or shovel or hoe; and then how some inventive genius more brilliant or more lazy than his fellows, would contrive to attach to it an ox or an ass or his much-enduring squaw, and transform it into a plow. Such betterments come tardily with the slow unfoldings of the ages. At the time of the chieftainship of Fuh-hi the tribes had made but little advance toward the arts of civilized life. They had learned to produce fire by friction, to make clothing of skins, to build huts and dig caves; they had contrived a sort of notation by means of knotted cords; they had done something toward clearing and draining the



land. From this point forward the advance was more rapid. The reign of Fuh-hi seems itself to have been prolific; better clothing, better cabins, better food were among the fruits of his times. The knotted cord disappeared and a sort of ideograph took its place. Marriage was enjoined, and the people learned to labor. Fuh-hi seems to have been the Hiawatha of his race. Within two centuries was invented the famous Cycle of sixty years, which has governed the Chinese calendar from that day to this, and has been in use therefore for more than forty-five hundred years, the longest chronological era known. Five centuries more and we find them observing the stars and recording eclipses. By about the same period the crude marks devised by Fuh-hi had grown into more orderly characters somewhat resembling the modern, and the people had learned to use them in writing.

In one of his volumes Niebuhr charges his opponents with having overlooked the fact "that no single example can be brought forward of an actually savage people having independently become civilized." But China appears to be such an example. If Rome brought her light from Greece, and Greece took hers from Egypt, and Egypt kindled hers at the primitive hearthstone

of the race, here was an empire that borrowed from no other, but lighted her own torch and on her own soil. And from the early dawn until now, oftentimes checked but never entirely interrupted, the progress of the national life has made each century broader and richer than the last in the material appliances of oriental comfort and the industrial arts.

It is time to take account of the other "stream of tendency" of which I have spoken — the religious knowledge which these barbaric tribes brought with them. What became of it? Crude and elementary it must have been, and yet, as we have seen, it became an impulse in their rising civilization. Did it continue to supply them with higher ideals, and so continue to uplift and enlighten? Or did it go down in the general struggle for existence? Did it spend itself and disappear? We can understand the evolution of the primitive savage into the modern oriental as a process of mechanical civilization. But there is another side to him. In his moral nature the Chinaman seems almost like an example of arrested development; so much so that in contrast with the swift movements of the west his whole type of civilization has been called "stationary." What has hap-

pened? While the mechanical side of his development has been slowly rising, have the spiritual forces with which he seems to have been equipped at the start entirely ebbed away? If we turn from his material growth and enter his moral world we may experience something of a shock. There are curious phenomena there; our discoveries may be interesting in themselves, and may possibly help to account for some of the incongruities we find in his make-up.

When the first colonists arrived it is evident that they brought with them that knowledge of the true God which had been held by their forefathers and which is so plainly reflected from the pages of the Shu-king. They seem to have made no strenuous effort to retain it, and the light began to fade from the national consciousness. It was a slow and gradual eclipse. Judging from native records it was not till fifteen centuries after the settlement of the country that the Chinese began to worship images. Their original conception of the Supreme Being had suffered a sad change before any such travesty could have been thought of. But now they have reached a farther extreme. No other great people in the world have ever so lapsed into practical atheism. In all that vast empire there is now but one native temple conse-

crated to the worship of the supreme Deity, and but one worshiper, the emperor, who celebrates the pageant three times a year. But before Confucius and for some centuries after him this higher form of worship was common among the people. The name of God is frequent in both the Shi-king and the Shu-king. "Te, or Shang-te, appears there as a personal being, ruling in heaven and on earth, the author of man's moral nature, the governor among the nations, by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, the rewarder of the good and the punisher of the bad."<sup>1</sup> These appear to have been the earliest conceptions of God among the Chinese. So inwrought are they into the very texture of the ancient chronicles and odes that Confucius himself, who "preferred to speak of Heaven" rather than of God, did not expunge them from his compilations, but left them just as they stand to reflect the earlier and purer beliefs. Listen to such a prayer as this: "T'ang said, I, the child Le, presume to use a dark-colored victim, and presume to announce to thee, O most great and sovereign God, that the sinner I dare not pardon, and thy ministers, O God, I do not keep in obscurity. The examination of them is

<sup>1</sup> See the whole passage: Dr. Legge, *Life and Teachings of Confucius*, pp. 100-102.

by thy mind, O God.”<sup>1</sup> Yu the Great, founder of the Hea dynasty, 2205 B. C., “sought for able men to honor God.”<sup>2</sup> The house of Chau showed its fitness to assume the reins of empire by seeking men “who should reverently serve God, and appointing them as presidents and chiefs of the people.”<sup>3</sup> Shun, 2238 B. C., offered sacrifices to the Supreme Ruler.<sup>4</sup> Shin-nung, the successor of Fuh-hi, about 2737 B. C., “sacrificed, say the Chinese historians, to the Supreme Lord in the temple of light.”<sup>5</sup> Such tokens of monotheistic belief are common in the earliest chronicles and ballads. Along with them are traces of other ideas which sound strangely familiar to minds that are accustomed to think in terms of the bible. “Without recognizing the ordinances of heaven,” said Confucius, “it is impossible to be a superior man.”<sup>6</sup> “He who offends against heaven has none to whom he can pray.”<sup>7</sup> And here is the Golden Rule in two of the many forms in which it appears in the teachings of the eastern sage. “Tsze-kung said, What I do not wish men to do to me, I also wish

<sup>1</sup> *Confucian Analects*, B. XX : 1, 3. T'ang was the founder of the Shang dynasty, 1766 B. C. The “sinner” is the tyrant K'ē, the last ruler of the preceding line.

<sup>2</sup> From Chinese authors. Loomis, *Confucius and the Chinese Classics*, p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Do, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> Gutzlaff, *History of China*, I : p. 84.

<sup>5</sup> Pauthier, *Histoire de la Chine*, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> *Analects*, B. XX : iii, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Do, B. III : xiii, 2.

not to do to men. The Master said, Tsze, you have not attained to that."<sup>1</sup> "Tsze-kung asked, saying, Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life? The Master said, Is not Reciprocity such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."<sup>2</sup> In his description of the Shi-king Mr. Hardwick says, "It comprises three hundred and eleven odes and other lyrics, for the most part moral in their tone, and sometimes breathing, in the midst of tender sentiments and deep regrets, a freshness and simplicity entirely characteristic of the earliest ages of mankind. The ancient bard appears more conscious than the modern Chinaman of some corruption cleaving to the human family as a whole; and here and there we trace an ardent aspiration after some more lofty stage of being, which as time went over was completely stifled by the growing love of self and the incurable self-sufficiency engendered in the heart of the Chinese."<sup>3</sup>

These few citations out of multitudes will sufficiently exhibit the spirit which pervades the surviving fragments of early Chinese tradition. It is manifest that the first immigrants brought with them a clearer and larger knowledge of God than

<sup>1</sup> *Analects*, B. V : xi.      <sup>2</sup> *Do. B. XV* : xxiii.

<sup>3</sup> *Christ and other Masters*, Part III : pp. 19, 20.



was retained by their posterity. To the modern Confucian-Taoist-Buddhist ancestor-worshipping Chinaman these traces of a higher spiritual knowledge must be quite unintelligible. The Chinese reverence their classics with an almost superstitious homage; but the great Name which shines on many a page has lost its power. In their vague remembrance of the God of their fathers the mass of the people can rise no higher now than to worship heaven and earth, and even that is done for them on stated occasions by their officials. The highest conception of God recoverable by their acutest philosophers is that of an invisible universal soul to the visible universal body. From this dogma downward to materialism and idolatry is a rapid descent; and here is where the Chinese are today. Their knowledge of God is but an infinitesimal fragment of that which they possessed when they first entered the country. By sheer neglect of it that priceless inheritance has slowly melted away.

The causes of this decay are not far to seek. To say nothing of the unwholesome propensity for things evil which seems to afflict human nature — a factor in history as disastrous then as now — the conditions of nomadic life would naturally draw the attention away from such momentous

subjects and concentrate it on the immediate struggle for existence. The thought of God is so vast, so mysterious, so baffling, that we can easily imagine the early pagan tiring of the lofty pursuit and giving over the attempt to hold a knowledge which seemed so volatile in itself and was often so unwelcome in the possession. The apparatus of thought was meagre. The language was as rude as were the symbols by which men sought to express it. With such inadequate means for retaining knowledge, and such ever waning motives, it is not wonderful that the primitive tribes, in the thick of the struggle for existence and quite willing to be relieved of moral restraint, should gradually slacken their hold on the divine.

Especially is this moral deterioration apparent from the time of Confucius. His influence moulded the nation into conformity with maxims of conduct, business, manners, political economy; and the religious sense has proportionally dwindled. He was a statesman, and had no thought of founding a religion or being taken for a religious reformer. He would be on good terms with the gods, but keep out of their way. Living himself an upright life, he gave his disciples rules of behaviour worthy of Chesterfield, maxims of common sense like those of Franklin, precepts of

morals that might have come from Epictetus, or Marcus Aurelius, or even Paul; but as to the soul and its spiritual relations and responsibilities he maintained a sort of armed neutrality. To this day no man can affirm what were his innermost beliefs. "The subjects on which the Master did not talk were prodigious things, feats of strength, disorder, and spiritual beings."<sup>1</sup> A thousand years later one of the emperors rejected Confucianism because it did not inform him about the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. The whole vast authority of this wonderful man, whose name has for more than twenty centuries wielded an immensely greater power than did his living self, has gone into the scale of political philosophy; and the national conscience has easily slackened its hold of that which appeared to be of so little importance to the Master. Yet it is an illustrious spectacle; and every generous mind must admire the persistent courage and hopefulness of the sage, as through all the vicissitudes of his life—teacher, traveler, premier, exile, author—he steadfastly held to his one heroic aim. Standing as he did in the midst of oppressions, cruelties, debaucheries, misgovernment, corruption, anarchy, he undertook single-handed to

<sup>1</sup> *Analects*, B. VII: 20.

reduce the chaos to order and pacify the quarrelling provinces; struggling to stem the tide with only the native force of virtue for his sole means of achievement. Vain hope! He had a royal faith in the possibilities of human nature, but he never found in his sordid countrymen the virtue which was to work such magic results. The moral decay of the nation must have gone far when even such a mind as his could not appreciate the reforming and elevating influences that would have come from the knowledge and service of the true God.

During the life of Confucius his contemporary Lao-tse was dreaming out the curious system which has since grown into such a farrago of sorcery, necromancy, and demon-worship commingled. Five or six centuries later the advent of Buddhism from India completed the triad of creeds. And since Buddhism drifted down into image-worship the three have gone on together demoralizing the empire and reducing the religious ideas of the people more and more hopelessly to the ordinary pagan level. At about the time of the Norman conquest of England there occurred one of those minor eras of the revival of letters, so many of which are chronicled in Chinese history; and the majority of the writers were annotators who employed much of their ingenuity

in explaining away the allusions to the supreme God that still survived from the ancient classics. So often as this process was repeated the nation settled deeper and deeper into ignorance of the true God. Their ancient literature shows abundantly that the Chinese once knew Him; their modern literature still more amply betrays the fact that they know Him no longer. And the work of our missionaries, whom they now and then turn upon and glorify with martyrdom, is really not so much the communication of a foreign religion as the restoration of their own proper relations to the God of their fathers.

It is in this direction we must find the principal cause that produced the effect we see today in the stunted civilization of China. Those lands which have preserved and cherished the inspirations of religion are alert and keen, teeming with scientific research and inventive art, resonant with the hum of machinery that is bringing the best products of labor and the tribute of every clime within the reach of all; while poor China, antiquated and unwieldy, lacking the stimulus of the highest motive, is content to plod clumsily on, with the tools and apparatus of a thousand years ago; so self-centred and so indifferent to anything but her own past that she would never even have heard of the

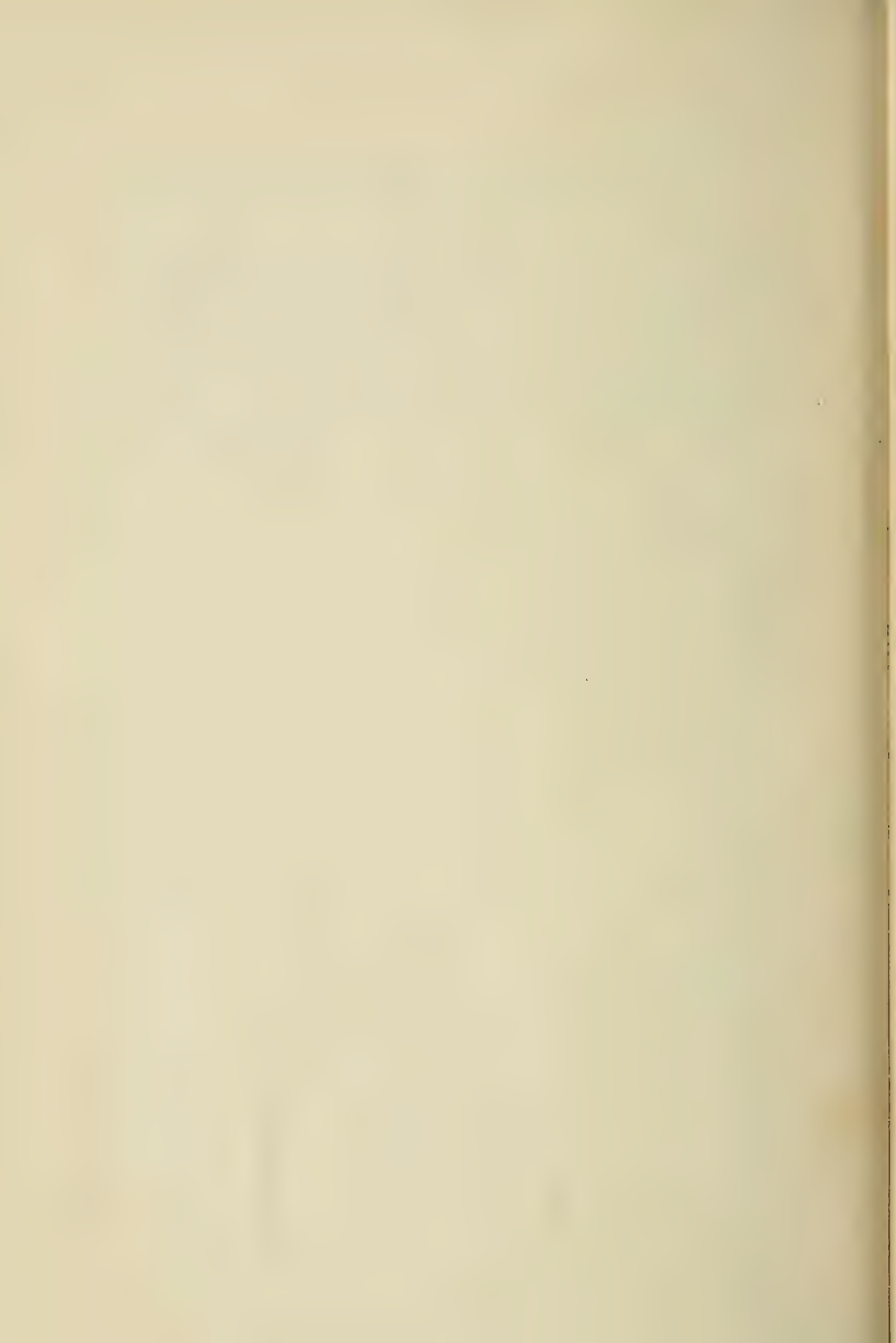


miracles of steam and electricity had they not been forced on her attention by the enterprise of the very nations whom she affects to despise. The Chinaman walks backward through life, worshipping the past and ignorant of the future. No wonder that such a habit of regression and on such a low pedestrian level has exhausted the powers of civilization and has brought the development of the empire to a standstill. And although the spirit of the Occident is beginning to pour in upon the Orient the activities and methods of the modern business world, what is still lacking is the stimulus of high religious motive. A torpid oriental temperament, even though seasoned with a kind of Anglo-Saxon sturdiness, must need the quickening of some divine afflatus. The national arrogance and the national materialism both need to be deodorized. The whole fabric of Chinese civilization, allowing all we may for its remarkable excellencies, was yet left palsied and decrepit by the loss of the religious ingredient, and demands re-sanitation; a divine alchemy which can only be wrought by this gracious agency from above. All honor to those faithful Christian workers, Protestant and Catholic, who are laboring to restore and revivify in the national consciousness, and in a higher form, the knowledge of the Su-

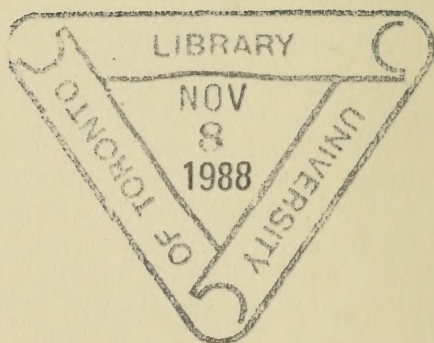


preme God which the progenitors of the empire once possessed. When Chinese society becomes Christianized, and the great empire, interfused with the modern spirit, learns to look for her golden age in a reconstructed future rather than in a faded past, she will find at last the realization of her dreams.









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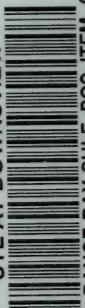
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